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A MAN OF HIS WORD

BY ALICE DUER MILLER

I.

"GOOD-EVENING, Dickie," said Mrs. Mayburn, entering the drawing-room. "I do so wish that you would have a larger mirror in the hall. I never know when I dine here whether I'm tidy or not. Oh, no, not *neat*, you silly boy, but as handsome as I was when I saw myself last at my own dressing-table. However, I see by your expression that I give complete satisfaction.

Mr. Richard Dyson allowed the look that had spoken so eloquently to continue his only answer,—merely extending it from the top of her little dark head to the bottom of her flounced skirt—no very great distance. He was a very young man, scarcely more than a boy, both in years and appearance, but the inheritance of a large fortune, with the attendant responsibilities, which he ought to have considered heavy, and flatteries, which he would have done well to consider light, had given him the self-confidence and assurance of an older man. He was tall and curly headed, with shoulders that might have made the fortune of a poor tailor had he ever employed any but the best.

Now he did not speak, but, putting out his hand, straightened a buckle at her throat, a complicated tangle of flashing loops.

"I'm glad we did not get the emeralds, after all," he murmured reflectively.

Ida Mayburn stepped back with a little laugh. "Pray, Dickie, be a trifle more circumspect," she said. "If Percy has finished drawing himself out of his goloshes, you might remind him that he is married to me."

"Oh, don't disturb yourself. He is in the dining-room, teaching Salters how to make a new cocktail," Dick answered; but he followed

her suggestion, thrust his hands to safety in his pockets, and turned rather irritably on his heel.

Mrs. Mayburn directed her attention to a mirror over the mantel-piece, which was more to her liking than the one in the hall, and there was a silence for a moment until Dick said,—

“By the way, who is Mrs. Fane, and why am I entertaining her at dinner?”

Mrs. Mayburn sighed. “Mrs. Fane,” she said, “is retribution. When I went West last year in the Smithsons’ car I saw a great deal of her brother, who was or is Governor of Iowa,—or no, certainly not Iowa, but some State or other——”

“Upon my word,” interrupted Dyson, “you’re not very flattering to the Governor.”

“Ah, but I *was*,” she responded with a smile, “and he too, I assure you. He used to take me to all sorts of public functions and government buildings, and try to squeeze my hand when the clerks were not looking, only, of course, I wouldn’t let him do anything so crude,—so *dangerous*, I called it to him,—and, of course, when I went away I said how wholly I owed the pleasure of my visit to him, and he said how glad he should always be to do the honors of his native city to any of my friends, and I could scarcely do less than express the same intention in regard to any of his. Naturally, I did not expect to be taken up within a year by the arrival of a large, middle-aged sister, with a thirst for social diversions, and no qualification. However, I’ve done my best. I’ve sent her the carriage every afternoon, and asked her to dine once to meet all my family-in-law, so now I thought you might like to sacrifice yourself in her entertainment. What’s the use of having well-to-do bachelor friends?”

“Sacrifice!” returned Dyson airily. “Not at all, I assure you. It is no sacrifice to afford her an evening of Percy’s uninterrupted conversation,—no sacrifice of *me*, at least.”

“What a saucy boy you are, Dickie,” Mrs. Mayburn replied, without a trace of reproof in her tone; “I dare say Mrs. Fane will find Percy electrically thrilling.”

Dick protested. “You misunderstand me completely,” he said. “I referred merely to the fact that in a party of four you must perforce be content with me alone during the evening.”

At this they looked at each other and smiled, and before they had time to speak again Mr. Mayburn entered the room, wiping the enormous mustache whose production seemed to have exhausted his vitality. He was a small, whitish-brown man, supposed to be rapidly drinking himself to death. It was generally understood to be the badness of his habits which caused the infrequency of his appearances

in his wife's company, but, fortunately for both of them, his presence was so inconspicuous that his absence was rarely remarked.

A few minutes later Salters drew the curtains and announced "Mrs. Fane."

Mrs. Mayburn had been right in describing her as large and middle-aged, for though in actual years she was perhaps no older than many ladies who lay loud claims to youth, she had in her figure and dress ranged herself frankly with the older generation. Nevertheless, there was in her open countenance and her frank, almost bold, eyes more of youth's spirit than in all the fashion and beauty of her better-preserved contemporaries. She gave an impression of capability,—of a mind which, whether brilliant or not, was all and ever at the disposal of its owner. It soon appeared that she was voluble, but with that less objectionable volubility that springs not from a mistaken idea of social requirements, but from the honest desire to talk.

"I'm afraid I'm late," she said, having hastily acknowledged the introduction of her host. "I thought so when I rang the bell, but I knew it the instant I saw your butler's face."

"Oh, you mustn't mind Salters," said Mrs. Mayburn. "I don't, and he disapproves of me more than of anything else in the world."

"Servants know all about us nowadays," said Mr. Mayburn suddenly, at which his wife and Dyson turned and regarded him with something suggesting anxiety in their expressions. Seeing, however, that he had merely been making a conscientious contribution to the general conversation, Mrs. Mayburn answered lightly:

"Poor Salters! No wonder he's aged. Fancy knowing all about Dickie."

"I'm sure that is an injustice," said Mrs. Fane with rather ponderous kindness. "I'm sure Mr. Dyson does not look as if he would turn anyone's hair gray."

"Ah, his looks are the things that drive him to it," the other lady returned, as, dinner being announced, they began to move towards the dining-room. "No one but an angel could look as good as Dickie does, and not presume upon it."

Mrs. Fane chuckled delightedly. "That reminds me of my daughter," she said. "I was telling her only this afternoon that she can be just as double-dealing as the rest of us, for all she looks so superior."

"Your daughter!" cried Mrs. Mayburn, her obligations to the Governor starting to life. "I did not know your daughter was with you."

"She's not. She lives here."

"Oh, she's married?"

"Indeed she is not. I wish she were. Well, perhaps I ought not to say that, but I can't help feeling that if the town she was born

in isn't good enough for her and she must live in New York, she would do better to marry a nice man who is already settled here and can support her comfortably; but she won't listen to me; she insists I only want her to marry him because I think every woman is happier married."

"And quite right too, Mrs. Fane,—every woman and no man," said Dick.

"Speak up, Percy, in favor of the holy state," cried Mrs. Mayburn, prodding her better-half with her fork, but, since he was occupied with his whitebait, entirely without effect.

"Well, of course," Mrs. Fane went on reflectively, "I suppose Green Hill is not an amusing place for a young girl."

"I'm sure I found it a most delightful town when I was there," Ida returned politely, thinking of the Governor.

"I've been very happy there," said Mrs. Fane, "and I know I'd rather do nothing there than teach school here."

"You don't mean to say your daughter voluntarily teaches school!" cried Dick, opening his eyes in horror. To his mind only one thing could render a clever woman more unattractive, and that was the desire to impart her knowledge.

Mrs. Fane nodded, a strange mixture of pride and disapproval visible on her face. "Yes," she said, "she has full charge of the Primary Department in Miss Graydon's school. She is perfectly fitted to take the seniors,—she has been through college and has had offers for much more advanced work,—but she likes little children best."

"Ye Gods!" cried Dyson impudently, "she must be desperately set against that well-settled, comfortably-off man."

"But she likes teaching, if you will believe me," answered her mother; "she seems to be happier with an occupation. Well, it's a sad thing, Mr. Dyson, for children to be more high-minded than their parents."

"It's a sorrow to which I never subjected mine," returned Dick lightly.

"In fact, between ourselves," Mrs. Fane continued in a burst of confidence (it was evident that she was talking upon the subject which she ever found most interesting), "I don't think these modern intellectual women are a bit more attractive than the old-fashioned kind who did not know so much. Do you, Mrs. Mayburn?"

Mrs. Mayburn looked hopeless. "I don't think I ever met any," she said vaguely. Fortunately, Dick, with a very definite opinion, rushed to the rescue.

"Attractive!" he cried; "I should rather think not. There is no mystery about intellect. If I had a daughter, there are only two things I should want her to know,—how to wear her clothes and

when to look down,—and I should not expect her to have to be taught those."

"My daughter thinks every woman would be happier with an occupation," said Mrs. Fane timidly.

"She's wrong," returned Dick without the least hesitation. "There is only one way for women to be happy, and that is by pleasing *us*."

"Really, Dick," put in Mrs. Mayburn, who, without having taken the trouble to follow a conversation that had no personal relation to herself, was mildly irritated by this sentiment.

"And what else?" Dick pursued, thoroughly roused, now that a prejudice had been touched. "Does any woman get love, or money, or position, or flattery, or anything else that she likes, except through men?"

These views were thoroughly satisfactory to Mrs. Fane, but she felt it her duty to present the opposite side for the sake of her absent daughter.

"And you can't imagine a woman's ever following a profession, Mr. Dyson?"

"Not unless she isn't able to find an able-bodied man to support her."

"Nor needing something to do?"

"I never knew a woman needing something to do if the harassing of my sex were within her powers."

"Now, I don't know, Dyson, I don't know," said Mr. Mayburn, suddenly awakening from his habitual trance. "An intellectual woman is better able to appreciate justly an intelligent man."

"Good Heaven, Percy, do you want to be justly appreciated?" Dickie cried scornfully. "How vain of you! I want to be adored, and I'm modest enough to think that too much intelligence on the lady's part would not contribute to that result."

"But surely, Mr. Dyson," said Mrs. Fane, who had all of a sudden realized that Dickie was assuming that her daughter could not be attractive, whereas she felt that the reverse was the truth,—“surely you have been attracted by an intelligent woman at some time in your life."

"I don't know whether to say 'always' or 'never,' Mrs. Fane, because, you see, I believe that feminine intelligence can manifest itself only by concealing its existence."

"Oh, nonsense, Dickie, dear," said Mrs. Mayburn. "You are using the most tremendous long words, which you may understand, but which I know I don't." She began to be a good deal bored with the conversation. It would have been more amusing if she could have continued to feel irritated, but what was the use of taking the trouble to follow his absurd arraignment of her sex while the fact stood out

so clearly that he admired *her* to the borders of folly. It mattered very little to her that he should express contempt of women as long as it was evident that she could twist him round her little finger.

She soon succeeded in turning the conversation to subjects which she thought more entertaining, and on which she appeared to better advantage. It did not occur to her that not very many months afterwards she would be racking her brains to remember these very words.

After dinner they were going to the theatre, and here the programme sketched by Dickie and Mrs. Mayburn was put into effect. He seated himself behind her, on entering the box, and was soon whispering down the back of her neck, while Mr. Mayburn, desirous of enlivening Mrs. Fane's evening, observed after some thought that the house was full, and then leaned back with a sigh and pulled his mustache.

"There!" said Mrs. Mayburn, "did you hear that? Never say that Percy can't add to an evening's entertainment." And when, a half hour later, the poor gentleman exerted himself still further to observe that the play was dull, the other two very rudely burst into a fit of giggles that a more sensitive nature than Percy's might have noticed with distrust.

They did not find the play dull, for they troubled themselves very little to listen to it. On the contrary, Dick was ready to be pleased with everything,—the pleasure-going people, the familiar music, the pretty women on the stage, and the still prettier one in his box who was devoting her practised energies to pleasing him. He was sorry when it was over, and glad when Mrs. Mayburn, who was, perhaps, no more desirous than he that their tête-à-tête should end, suggested that they should walk home, for it was a mild May night.

They started, and almost on the instant the catastrophe had occurred. They were just half across the glittering thoroughfare on which the theatre opened, when Dick, who was walking ahead with Mrs. Mayburn, crossing in front of a car, stepped without seeing directly in the path of a runaway cab. The horse was actually at his elbow when a strong hand from behind him was laid on his shoulder and would have checked his onward course, had he not at the same instant seen his danger and started back. The runaway crashed past them, but Mrs. Fane, his would-be savior, had at his sudden yielding to her strength lost her balance and was lying under the wheels of the car.

Dyson knelt beside her in the centre of the crowd that sprang, mushroom like, about them. He wished very simply that he might change places with her. It was too awful for him to see a human being suffer so,—moreover, a woman, and a woman who had perhaps saved his life. Apart from his sympathy, he felt that to receive such

a sacrifice, however unintentionally given, was almost unbearable, that in some way his manhood was outraged by it. He burned by some irrevocably heroic action to save, to at least compensate, her, and yet knew that there was nothing in the world to do but kneel there on the pavement supporting her head and screening her sufferings a little from the pressing, murmuring crowd. Something of all this he tried to say, although he found himself tongue-tied by the appreciation of how little thanks or gratitude could mean to a creature in such a plight. Nevertheless, he said brokenly,—

“If my life could do you any good, if there is anything in heaven or earth I can do to help you——”

She made a faint motion of acquiescence. Then, as if realizing that her time was short, she made an effort to speak. He bent his head to hear.

“Marry my daughter,” she whispered.

He promised eagerly, almost lightly. Scoff as the brave may at physical suffering, there is no denying that its presence dwarfs all the ordinary ills of life,—poverty, bondage, even death itself, provided it be painless. So now Dyson felt that she had asked and he granted a little thing. Of what consequence was it, since still this pitiless suffering went on before his eyes. The witnessing, like the bearing, of great physical pain shuts out all but the present. Dyson could not realize the consequence of his promise. He had no mind to turn for a single instant to the future. He felt no crisis as far as he himself was concerned. The arrival of the ambulance surgeon with his blessed anæsthetic was to him an infinitely more momentous event.

Ten minutes later he called a hansom and followed the ambulance to the hospital, only to learn that the unfortunate woman had died on the way.

II.

DYSON awoke late the next day. He had not got to bed until nearly morning. He had gone at once to the Mrs. Stainer to whom, he remembered in a flash of intelligence, he had directed Mrs. Fane's invitation to dinner. She, it appeared, was her cousin, a gentle, rather helpless woman. Her husband, to whom, apparently, she clung on all occasions, was away, and Dick gave himself up to attending to all the ghastly arrangements of the situation. He never forgot that house. He stood long on the steps trying to rouse it with the feebly tinkling electric bell. He was finally admitted by poor, sleepy Mrs. Stainer herself, and they had held a conversation in whispers under the solitary gas-light in the hall. It all seemed like an impossible nightmare. At length he had said:

"I think Mrs. Fane mentioned that she had a daughter. Ought not she to be told at once. Where is she?"

And then he found, to his relief, that she was there asleep in that very house, and that Mrs. Stainer must naturally undertake the task of breaking the news to her.

When at last he got into bed, tired in mind and body, he slept that heavy, dreamless sleep that drops like a curtain between the present and the past.

For a second after he opened his eyes his mind was as blank of the tragedy as if he had not witnessed it. Then it leaped, whole and vivid, before him. "Ah, poor woman!" he said aloud, and the very detachment that made him now merely a compassionate outsider enabled him to realize the next instant for the first time his own eternal connection with the incident. He had promised to marry a girl he had never seen.

"Good God, the thing's absurd!" he cried, and jumped out of bed, feeling that the commonplace of dressing must serve to disassociate him from so improbable a situation.

In an astonishingly short space of time he was dressed and running down stairs to breakfast, whistling and beating time with the morning paper on the banisters with an admirable imitation of light-heartedness. But it did not do. Nearer and nearer, like the tramp of a distant army, he was aware of the approach of the knowledge of his own bondage.

Superficially the world had a good deal spoiled Dickie Dyson,—had rendered him intolerant of opposition, somewhat insolent, and not a little pleasure-loving. Nevertheless, under it all his boy's nature remained singularly untouched, and in this field his sense of honor reigned supreme. So now he faced the facts boldly. He had promised to make this unseen woman his wife, and had, moreover, of his own free will added every asseveration that could the more securely bind him. He faced it boldly, but it did not as yet touch his sense of reality, it seemed something monstrous and incredible. "It is preposterous!" he said aloud.

It was, perhaps, with the object of making it seem more so that he rose from the breakfast-table and went on his way to see the little lady who was farthest from imagining any marriage for him a possibility, and who, had she known of this one, would have been farthest from understanding its necessity.

Mrs. Mayburn was at home, and more wonderful, for it was but twelve o'clock, was dressed. But not even here was Dick destined to find comfort. Mrs. Mayburn, like many people who are not possessed of very deep feelings, was under the necessity of expressing every bit she had. Her adjectives were abundant. The accident had

been "too hideous, too awful; it was quite the most dreadful thing she had ever known. *She* naturally felt it particularly, being, as she was, so sensitive to anything of the kind."

Dick declined her invitation to luncheon and flung away to his club, where his perturbation of mind was not likely to excite comment. At last his sense of obligation suggested that he should send a note of sympathy to Miss Fane, which he dispatched with an overwhelming box of flowers.

In answer to this, some days later, he received a letter from Mrs. Stainer to say that her cousin had gone back to Green Hill, where she would spend the summer with her uncle. Dick's heart rose like a belated criminal's. His fate was, of course, only deferred, but deferred for four or five months, since he could not feel that it was his duty to pursue his future bride across the continent, and it was just possible that she might find the man of her heart in the meantime.

At any rate, he had several months to be free and light-hearted and to enjoy himself, and this he proceeded to do with not a little thoroughness. He rode, he drove, he played polo at Narragansett; at Newport he raced his automobile along the Ocean Drive in defiance of the law. His forty-footer lost and won with varying fortune, like others of her class, and finally he betook himself aboard his schooner with a party of carefully selected friends, among whom was Ida Mayburh, and spent a month in cruising in and out of any port that his fancy suggested and the winds allowed. In the autumn he took a small house in the best hunting country in this part of the world, and rode hard to hounds three days in the week.

It is scarcely remarkable, therefore, that he returned to town without having made up his mind on two important points in regard to his position. The first of these was whether or not any degree of unsuitableness on the part of Miss Fane would free him morally from his promise. If he could answer "yes" to this, he was, he felt, practically a free man again, for it would not be very difficult to persuade himself that a woman of her surroundings, occupation, and, for all he knew, age, would be an impossibility for him.

The other point, scarcely less important, concerned the manner of his wooing. Was he under any obligation to put his proposal in a plausible form? Was he in honor bound to urge his suit after a single refusal? If not, here again was escape, for he felt little doubt that he could place an offer of marriage before her in such a way as to make acceptance impossible.

And always, however glibly he argued with himself, came the remembrance that his promise had carried no conditions. He had said he would make Miss Fane his wife.

A day at length came when it was impossible to play with his conscience longer. He felt that action—immediate action—was necessary, although his return to town had made such action perfectly possible two weeks before. Now he saw he could not put it off another instant. As soon as he had swallowed his lunch he hastened to Mrs. Stainer's. But here disappointment, or more correctly delay, awaited him.

Mrs. Stainer was still a comparatively young woman, of the most domestic type, wholly absorbed in her husband and her five children. Still, she was good-looking and extremely good-natured, and Dick admired her hugely for the very virtues that would have bored him most intolerably if she had belonged to him.

They had been plunged into a sort of intimacy on the days following Mrs. Fane's death, and she welcomed Dickie cordially. No Miss Fane, however, appeared, and Dickie at last was forced to inquire for her timidly. The thought flashed through his mind that though he had read the papers carefully throughout the summer, her marriage with another might have taken place and he be none the wiser.

Such, however, was not the case. Mrs. Stainer was able to give him the most satisfactory accounts of Miss Fane, who was still Miss Fane, and who, it appeared, was in the habit of spending every Saturday and Sunday with her cousin, though the middle of the week saw her at Miss Graydon's school. Dick explained that he was most desirous of meeting her, that nothing but her departure from New York had prevented his seeing her in the spring, that he felt that his part in the tragedy of her mother's death constituted a sort of bond between them which nothing could break, and so on, very fluently, if not very truthfully.

Mrs. Stainer was much interested and thought him perfectly right. He saw with a groan that she was saying to herself, "And if anything should come of it, what a capital thing it would be for her." He knew that abstracted look on the faces of female relations. She said, moreover, that she had again and again heard her cousin express an earnest desire to meet him, and she advised him to go to Miss Graydon's, where Miss Fane should be at liberty for the afternoon.

Dick needed no second bidding. If he were to marry a school-teacher, he might as well see her in the pursuance of her hateful career. He was soon inquiring for Miss Fane at the front door of Miss Graydon's school.

The diminutive black boy who admitted him opined that Miss Fane could not see him for five minutes, and showed him upstairs to the drawing-room. It was a large, dreary room, in which Dickie fancied many little girls had awaited the opening of their horrid fate. He did not sit down, but stood in anxious contemplation of an engraving representing the "Last Communion of St. Jerome."

Then, fortunately for him, his attention was suddenly directed to the back room, which he could see through the open folding-doors. This was evidently one of the school-rooms. It was large and sunny, and in the midst of it stood a tall, slim young lady in black, with her hands clasped behind her back. Dick could see only her silhouette against the light, but this showed him a small, well-set head, and a delicate little profile.

Before her on six stools sat six very small girls. Their skirts stuck out stiffly round them; even their hair, whether floating free, confined by a comb, or tortured into a pigtail, stood out also. Their faces were all turned upward to the tall lady.

"And now," said this responsible person, "we have a few minutes before the bell rings. Has anyone any questions to ask about the lesson?"

A small hand went up with such unnecessary force as almost to topple its owner off her seat, while a shrill treble voice inquired,—

"Please, Miss Fane, does whales and tigers ever meet?" (The lesson seemed to have been in Natural History.)

Dick moved nearer and leaned unobserved against the door-jam. He felt curious to know how his future wife would answer this question.

"Why, no, Serena. How could they? Whales live in the ocean, and tigers in the jungle."

Serena colored and looked at her next-door neighbor, Elizabeth May, who had been consulted before Serena had focussed the eye of publicity upon herself.

Elizabeth May was at least six months older, and now evidently struggled between her recognition of the responsibility of age and her desire to keep clear of Serena's failure. The nobler sentiment, however, conquered, and she said with a faintly apologetic smile, as one who stands by her friend against her better judgment,—

"But, Miss Fane, if a tiger came down to drink near the mouth of a river, a big river——"

"A *very* big one," echoed Serena.

"And the whale had got floated a little way up by the tide——"

Serena nodded her approval.

"There's the bell, children," Miss Fane said, with, Dick fancied, some relief. "Now, where are the bean-bags?"

The six little figures slid off their six stools, attempting to flatten down the stiff skirts, which still, in defiance of modesty, insisted on accommodating themselves to a sedentary posture. They danced about the tall figure in black, and held up beseeching hands for the bean-bags.

Then Dick saw the small black boy approach Miss Fane, and the

dancing stopped. She threaded her way through the children, and an instant later stood before Dick. He saw at once, with something between relief and despair, that one of his difficulties was disposed of. She was not in the least impossible. On the contrary, she was distinctly handsome: her features, as he had seen before, were fine and pretty, her skin pale and clear, and her eyes as beautiful a pair of brown eyes as a man might wish to see himself reflected in.

Dick held out his hand.

"I suppose, Miss Fane," he said, "that I ought not to have come here like this without your express permission, but I have wanted very much to see you, and first you were away, and then I was, and at last I was so much disappointed at not finding you at Mrs. Stainer's to-day that when she said you would not be angry at me for coming, I could not resist the temptation to come."

"You are very good," Miss Fane replied gravely. "But you know how much more anxious I must be to see you than you can possibly be to see me. I have to thank you for all you did for us at the time of my mother's death."

"Did for you! If your mother had not tried to save my life, she might be with you now," Dyson answered.

"I have wished for so long to have you tell me all about it," she said.

And this, within certain limits, Dick proceeded to do. The recital, however softened, could scarcely fail to be painful to both of them, and as he finished a silence fell on them, which was presently broken by a faint tap on the door, and Elizabeth May entered. Elizabeth May was exceedingly plump, and her walk, especially in moments of embarrassment like the present, showed a decided tendency to degenerate into a waddle.

"Please, Miss Fane," she began in a hasty lisp, "I was to say if you're oc'pied with this gentleman, mightn't we please have the bean-bags alone by ourselves in the veranda?"

Dick was fond of children, just as he was fond of puppies and any other healthy, light-hearted young animal. So now, in order to give Miss Fane time to recover herself a little, he drew Elizabeth May towards him and said:

"Did I hear the word bean-bags? Any little girl who has never seen me play bean-bags is still in ignorance of the pleasures of the game."

Elizabeth May did not answer. She looked down and blushed, but she allowed herself to be drawn nearer, and finally leaned heavily upon his knee.

"And I can tell you all about those tigers and whales. Meet! I believe you! They have a rendezvous at the mouth of the Ganges.

You don't know what a rendezvous is? Ah, well, you will, all in good time," and so on, until, when Miss Fane looked up, after having surreptitiously wiped away her tears, the vision that met her eyes was that of Elizabeth May waddling out of the room, with her hand firmly clasped in Dickie's, in search of the land where the bean-bags grew.

Fortunately, Miss Graydon's school was not a very strict one, especially as far as the Primary Department was concerned, for Dyson had no intention of being turned out. He insisted on staying and playing bean-bags, and it could not be denied that he added enormously to the game. He was a great success, particularly in the eyes of Elizabeth May, who troubled herself to find no other appellation for him than "my gentleman." It might have seemed that Miss Fane had better right to make use of this title, especially when, in a somewhat overheated and tousled condition, he at length came to say good-by.

"When may I see you again, almost at once?" he said. "Let me see, to-day is Wednesday. May I come to see you at Mrs. Stainer's on Saturday?" She gave a very cordial consent.

As he went downstairs he heard Elizabeth May's shrill voice exclaiming:

"Oh, I *do* like my gentleman. I like him better than papa! Don't you like him, Miss Fane?"

Elizabeth May would have been surprised to know how burningly her gentleman longed to hear her question answered in the negative.

III.

A MONTH later he determined to put his fate to the test. Their relation had developed but little since their first meeting. He had, it is true, seen her constantly, and in a way they had become almost intimate, but not a single spark had been struck between them. All Dick's prejudices against the intelligent woman had been confirmed, for here was one who started with the unusual advantage of good-looks and could not stir him to bare interest. This, where Dick was concerned, meant a sad lack of charm. There were moments when he felt leniently enough disposed to her to fancy that the real obstacle lay in the matter of clothes. For, alas, his taste had grown degenerately critical under the able tuition of Mrs. Mayburn, and Miss Fane's extremely simple black dresses did not give him that conviction of their being the perfection of fashion that he expected of feminine attire. He had, unfortunately, learned to know the difference between a neatly and a well dressed woman.

Despairing, therefore, of ever attaining the faintest sentiment for her, he resolved to waste no further time in torturing uncertainty, but to ask her at once to marry him.

He was amazed to find that he awaited her in Mrs. Stainer's drawing-room with a nervousness that would have done credit to the most ardent lover. He could not remember ever before having been utterly at a loss as to the terms in which he was to address a woman, but now he could not imagine how he should treat her.

An idea, however, occurred to him when she entered the room. She had been walking, and exercise had given her a color, an addition that immensely increased her beauty. Dickie did not hesitate an instant. He took her in his arms and kissed her without further ado. He was grieved to find that he derived no sensation whatsoever from the process, but if it served to make her angry, they would have advanced a little nearer to intimacy,—there is nothing like a good scene for that. Dickie felt a scene would help him enormously. But on releasing her he observed with sorrow that she did not seem in the least angry. She smiled tolerantly and said:

"Why, you absurd boy! What in the world did you do that for?"

Dick was not accustomed to having his caresses received in just this way, but he replied with a fair imitation of intensity,—

"Why, usually, does a man kiss a woman?"

Miss Fane raised her eyes to the ceiling with a ruminating air.

"Let me see, why is it?" she said meditatively. "Because he is mad, because a power stronger than himself impelled him, because he must have done it, even if he had died for it the next instant, because—I don't know that I remember any other of the cogent reasons advanced by your sex on these occasions."

"You speak with a great deal of knowledge," Dick returned sulkily, for he seemed to remember having made use of such phrases himself in his time.

"If everyone acted with as little provocation as you, I should not hesitate to admit unlimited experience, but as, fortunately, they don't, let us say that it is wonderful what the higher education does for the least experienced." She smiled, well aware of his prejudice against her occupation, and then went on reflectively: "I believe, now, that I omitted a most important reason from my list. I believe that a man often kisses a woman just because he fears she expects it; but that wouldn't apply here, you see, because I did not even know you were in the room."

"And if you had known and expected, you wouldn't have come in?"

"Ah," said Miss Fane, laying a finger on her curving lips, "I could not be so unwise as to say 'yes,' nor so rude as to say 'no.'"

"Why, what a fraud you are," cried Dickie, his natural impudence asserting itself, "to go on talking political economy and current events when you are so awfully good at a rather more amusing sort of conversation."

"Oh, dear me, do you find it more amusing?" she replied irritably. "I had supposed from the solemnity, and, let me say, the frequency, of your visits that you preferred political economy to any subject that might be suggested."

"I wish to Heaven I had kissed you three weeks ago."

"It is delightfully flattering to know that you have found the experiment so satisfactory. Might one again inquire what was its object, or, shall we say, its cause?"

Dick put his hands in his pockets and stood looking at her a trifle defiantly.

"I had two causes: A—what do you call 'em?—a primary and a secondary cause: (a) because you looked so devilish well; (b) because I thought it might help me to ask you to marry me."

He derived a certain bitter amusement from the look of blank surprise that crossed his companion's face. She laid her hand on her breast.

"Me!" she said. "Why, I never thought of such a thing!"

"Well, really, I should think you might have. I've been coming here as often as you would let me since I first saw you, haven't I?"

"And I have been wondering why you did. It did not seem to amuse you particularly."

"I'm a great hand at concealing my feelings," Dick answered grimly.

"Surely you are not in love with me?"

"Are you quite sure?"

"Well, the others were entirely different in their way of behaving. I should be quite sure if——" She hesitated.

"If I had not asked you to marry me?" Dick suggested, smiling.

She raised serious eyes to his. "Yes," she said, "that makes me think you must be, after all."

"A very wise conclusion," Dyson returned. "Well, will you have me?"

"Oh, but, you hasty creature, I can't decide all in a second like this. Let me think it over. I don't know what I shall do——" She stopped, and then, with a sudden gesture, she added: "Yes, I do know. I am not being honest. I will marry you."

Dick made a little movement of despair, at which she, mistaking it for one of aggression, went on hastily:

"One minute! I ought to tell you first that I don't love you. You rather excite me, and I like to be with you, and, of course, I am glad other women like you, and that you are rich and all that, but I don't love, not in the very least. If that contents you——"

"It more than contents me," cried Dickie eagerly. "My disposition is very peculiar. I hate to be loved. It fuses me dreadfully. I should

dislike nothing more than to be married to a woman who loved me. I derive comfort from the thought that you are most unlikely to do so. If you should ever feel the slightest impulse to do so, pray check it, for the sake of our future happiness."

"Do you really mean what you say?" asked Miss Fane, half amused, half piqued.

"I never said anything in my life that I meant half as sincerely," Dick answered fervently.

"Why, then, I may accept you with a clear conscience, for I don't suppose," she added, with the cheerful assurance of youth,—“I don't suppose that you could have found a woman less likely to fall in love."

"Capital!" Dyson cried with enthusiasm. "You could not say anything that would give me more pleasure."

"Are you quite sure that you will always remain equally content to do all the loving for both of us?" asked she with pardonable vanity.

"Quite sure."

"Ah," said Miss Fane with a sigh, "my poor mother! It would have made her very happy to know that I was not to die a friendless old maid. I wish she were alive to know."

Dickie was able to echo the wish for Mrs. Fane's presence in the flesh without hypocrisy.

A sudden feeling swept over him that he could not stand it another second, and he said instantly, "And now a horrid business engagement is going to take me from you," and, dropping his hands on her shoulders, he kissed her on both cheeks and was gone before she had time to recover from her astonishment.

His path, for one leading to a business engagement, turned in an odd direction. Mrs. Stainer lived to the west of the Park, and this he now crossed. Finding himself in the neighborhood of the animals, he stood a moment before the lion's cage and addressed the noble creature in the following terms:

"Poor devil! You'd like to be free too, wouldn't you?" But the king of beasts, who was looking far over the heads of the passers-by, merely blinked his yellow eyes, and Dickie passed on. He soon reached a small house in one of the streets leading out from the Park to the east, and, ringing the bell, inquired if Mrs. Mayburn were at home.

The man, who was new, replied discreetly that he could not be quite sure whether Mrs. Mayburn had returned from driving or not, and went away to examine Dick's card in private in order to discover whether or not this were the favored individual for whose sake all others were to be denied admittance during the afternoon. Having satisfied himself on this point, in an amazingly short time he reëntered the little reception-room and requested Dickie to follow him to the drawing-room.

Here the woman who so extraordinarily amused and pleased him was awaiting him,—a striking contrast to the one he had just left. Everything his eye fell on gave him pleasure,—the room, the fire, the silver tea-service (much of it was real old English, as Dyson knew to his cost), even the muffins on the table, and, most of all, the hostess, in her faint pink and lilac tea-gown, loose only that it might the more closely cling to her beautiful, round little figure.

As soon as the footman had disappeared (he had to hurry downstairs, for Mrs. Mayburn's great-uncle by marriage had already rung the bell, and had to be informed that Mrs. Mayburn would not be in until dinner-time, so that it was not worth while for the poor old gentleman to wait for her),—as soon, I say, as the footman had shut the door, Mrs. Mayburn began:

"You are staying to dinner with me. Percy is dining with a friend who wants to sell him an automobile. May his shadow never grow less! He felt quite badly about leaving me alone, but I told him I made a point of never interfering with his pleasures, and solitude was so restful at times. Dear Percy! He's almost the same as solitude!" Then, as Dickie did not respond, but sank into a chair with his chin dropped upon his breast, she added:

"What in the world is the matter with you? You look as if some dreadful calamity had occurred, as if you had lost all your money, or were about to be married, or something horrid——"

"I am about to be married."

There was a long silence, during which Mrs. Mayburn's hard, fierce glance tried to compel Dickie's, which remained obstinately averted. At last she said:

"Indeed! How coy you have been about your wooing! One is quite in the dark. Who is the lady?—the large-nosed widow whose attentions were so marked at Narragansett, or the little dancer, whose family was so aristocratic?"

"I am engaged to Miss Fane," Dickie interrupted in the deep growl of masculine displeasure.

"What! the advanced young person who teaches school, the daughter of that unfortunate creature?"

He nodded.

There was another pause, and then Mrs. Mayburn began fluently:

"Indeed, I must congratulate you. How you have outstripped your friends! Who would have supposed that you were destined to win that 'superior woman,' that intellectual Queen, a sort of Portia and Carrie Nation rolled into one, I take it. I have imagined you achieving a great many honors, but a school-teaching wife is rather beyond even *my* ideas of your merit. What was it I was reading in some book the other day about just such a couple?—'he had the discomfort

of knowing that he appeared a fool to his wife when he talked nonsense, and to everyone else when he talked sense."

"Glad you're so pleased," said Dickie with a snap.

"How could I fail to be? Matrimony is so steady to a young man, and I have no doubt that Miss Fane would be ballast enough for the lightest craft. By the way, what's her first name?"

A silence followed. Dick gave a ghastly sort of gasp as he realized that he had not the vaguest idea of the answer to this question. After a moment his tormenter went on gently,—

"Or is it too sacred to be pronounced in these profane precincts?"

"I should be delighted to pronounce it, if I knew what it were."

"You don't know your fiancée's name?"

"I have not an idea of it?"

Mrs. Mayburn rose with an air of determination. She came and leaned on the back of his chair, bending over him.

"What is the use of keeping up this farce, dear boy?" she said, and her pretty, bejewelled hand rested on his curly head. "It's not so very hard to see it all. How have you been entrapped into such an engagement?"

But Dick still held out. "Haven't been entrapped," he growled.

"Well, you won't continue entrapped much longer. Oh, no, nonsense! I sha'n't stand by and let you do this sort of thing. You must not marry that sort of person, especially against your will."

"Indeed, I must."

The white hand patted his head soothingly. "You are very honorable and all that, Dickie, dear, but, indeed, you cannot do it. It's too absurd."

"I can't be a cad, you know."

"It's better to be a cad than—than to be utterly miserable."

"Oh, well,"—he looked up at her gravely,—“I don't think so, you see."

Mrs. Mayburn felt irritated at his masculine obstinacy.

"Of course, I could see it would be hard on the girl. Does she love you very much?"

"Not a little bit, she took some pains to inform me."

"Then why does she insist on marrying you?"

"Oh, I suppose because she wants things,—just like other women."

Ida felt a pang of alarm. She knew that in indifference this other woman held the only weapon possible for her to hold under the circumstances. She herself would have felt confident of putting to nought a loving wife, but an indifferent one might be dangerous, considering Dickie's nature.

"Is she pretty?" she asked.

"Rather pretty. At times very handsome."

"Dickie, I believe that you are deceiving me, and that your reluctance is artificial."

A look answered her.

"Tell me about it, Dickie," she said coaxingly. "I know you hate to have to marry, so you might as well tell me all the rest."

He hesitated, but the result was a foregone conclusion. She understood men in general and Dyson in particular, and she was determined to know. Before half an hour had passed she had heard the whole story. She instantly made up her mind what she should do. She would go to this designing girl and put the facts before her. If she were really high-minded, this would be enough. If she were not, a threat to make everything public would certainly be effective. But even as this plan matured she heard Dickie say:

"Of course, you are thinking how devilish easy it would be to go and tell her why I am marrying her. Well, just realize one thing: I am *going* to marry her, and that being so, you would just give me the trouble of persuading her that what you said could not be true, and that I loved her for herself alone. I believe I *could* make love to her under necessity."

"I have not said I was thinking of telling her."

"No, and I hope you won't. It would be a bother to be forced to become the ardent lover, but it could be done. It's a part I can throw myself into as well as the next man, whereas now she is perfectly content with my somewhat lukewarm wooing. Won't you leave well-enough alone, Ida?"

For the first time she realized the unshakableness of Dick's resolve. It was hard for her to believe that anyone could not be persuaded to follow their wishes at the expense of their principles. Her heart sank, but she saw it would be unwise to carry out her first plan. Men were so dull, and so obstinate! Dick would be quite capable of refusing to be saved at any price. He meant what he said.

"Of course, I won't do anything you don't want me to, Dickie," she said, and her voice really trembled. "I can't bear to think of losing you altogether."

"Losing me!" cried Dyson, jumping to his feet. "Do you suppose that because I'm going to marry a woman who does not love me, I am going to cut myself off from——"

"A woman who does?" she whispered.

In the meantime Miss Fane had not been idle. On the departure of her future lord and master, she stepped hastily to the telephone, and having obtained the number she asked for, the following sentences might have been heard had any belated scholar been wandering near the telephone-room:

"Is this Mr. Brainard's office?" "Is Mr. Brainard in?" "Will

you ask him to come to the telephone a minute?" "Oh, just say a lady, please." "Is that you, Herbert?" "It's I, Philippa. I want very much to see you." "Oh Herbert, not such a *very* unusual wish." "A month. Oh, surely not so long." "But I've been so busy." "I'm sure you are,—much busier than I, of course." "But I never know when you are coming." "Of course, I should be in. Won't you come this afternoon? I want to speak to you." "Yes, rather important." "About six, on your way up town." "Thank you. Good-by."

And sure enough, about six, on his way up town, Mr. Brainard arrived. His appearance left no doubt that he was a rising lawyer. His brow could have belonged to no other profession, nor his chin to any but a man marked for success. If at times his manner betrayed a suspicion of pomposity, you could but feel how well in future times it would become the bench.

"It is three years since I have spent a whole month without seeing you," he remarked on entering.

The invariable accuracy of Mr. Brainard at times annoyed Miss Fane, but, repressing herself with an effort, she answered gently:

"Yes, I know. I've been so sorry to miss you so often of late, but I have been so busy——"

"I did not know your work occupied all your afternoons."

"No, of course it doesn't, but there seem to have been a lot of things that have taken me out lately."

The "lot of things" were represented solely by Dickie Dyson, for she had had no desire to subject her new friend to the searching criticisms of her old one, and her frequent walks with Dickie had always taken place on the afternoons she thought Brainard likely to visit her.

"It was very kind of you to send for me to-day," Brainard went on. "I think you said you had something to say to me."

"Yes, I had." Miss Fane's manner became a little nervous. "I thought I should like to tell you at once that I am thinking of doing something you won't approve of."

"I can guess what it is," Brainard replied calmly; "that Western college has sent for you again. I can only say again that I do not think it is enough to occupy your whole life. I really believe you would do better to marry me. I love you, I appreciate you, I——"

"But, Herbert, it isn't the university. It's somebody else who loves and appreciates me,—at least I suppose he does, or he would not want to marry me."

A faintly deeper color overspread Mr. Brainard's face, but his expression remained unaltered. "I hope," he said, "that you are not referring to that young doctor whom I always found so antagonistic?"

"I am referring to Mr. Dyson."

"Richard Dyson?"

"Yes. You know him?"

"Slightly. Our tastes are scarcely similar enough to encourage intimacy."

"I don't think I know quite what his tastes are," Philippa put in gently.

"Horses and automobiles, and most forms of expensive amusement. He is not, I must own, the sort of man I had imagined your falling in love with."

"Herbert," in a burst of confidence, "I am not in love with him."

"Then may I ask why you marry him?"

"I'm not in love with him, it's true, and yet it is all so unexpected, so exciting. There is an element of romance and mystery about it that—that thrills me more than I should have thought possible." There was something almost appealing in her manner, but Herbert was not softened.

"Pshaw, my dear Philippa, are you a child, or are you a woman of judgment? If you contemplate marrying a man you do not love, marry me, who am in some respects at least your equal, who can understand something of your interests, and offer you serious ones in return; instead of this boy, who has never thought of anything but his own pleasure, who has always lived among, and who would surround you with, silly, frivolous people, who would bore you to death. Why, if you were in love with him,—women take strange fancies,—there might be some reason for this folly, but—— How long have you known him?"

"About two months."

"*Philippa!*"

"Ah, but not two ordinary months. The circumstances have been unusual. You know he was with mamma when she was killed, and he was most kind afterwards,—more than that. Minna Stainer says she never saw anything like his thoughtfulness and consideration. And then as soon as I came back this autumn he came to see me, and spoke in a way that touched me, Herbert, very much. I think you can always tell when a person is under the stress of real feeling. He said that he felt he owed his life to my mother, and that if this did not make me hate him, he would like it to make me feel that I had a friend in him who would go to the end of the earth for me. Since then I have seen him almost every day."

Mr. Brainard bowed his head two or three times, as if to intimate entire comprehension.

"And you found him an intelligent companion?"

"I found him an extremely amusing one," she answered, laughing against her will.

"I should not have believed that you could feel so flippantly in such a matter," returned Herbert severely. Miss Fane grew grave.

"Why, to tell the truth, Herbert," she said, "it's hard to tell what I have found him. Yesterday I should have said I rather bored him than otherwise. He has kept coming to see me, but he never seemed to take much interest in anything I had to say to him; indeed, at this moment I don't think he has the least idea what sort of a person I am. He always exerted himself to be charming, and yet I felt as if I played a very small part on his stage. It could not have appeared more a matter of conscience in him to come if I had been his great-aunt; or if I had had the money in the question, I should never have doubted that that was his very ill-concealed inducement. And now suddenly I find that all the time he has been wanting to marry me. Men are so queer! One makes love to you for a year and expects you to take no notice of it, and another visits you formally for a month and expects you to see at once that his attentions are serious."

"And Mr. Dyson considers that he owes his life to your mother?"

"He has said so repeatedly."

"Did it ever occur to you, Philippa, that this is his way of paying the debt?"

Miss Fane laughed. "Candidly, it never did," she responded, "nor, now that you suggest it, does it strike me as very likely. It sounds a little mediæval, don't you think? And besides," she added more gravely, "do you think it quite just to assume that Mr. Dyson is so conceited and self-satisfied as to suppose he could pay off such a debt by merely making me his wife?"

"I sincerely hope it is not just, and yet he might be excused for thinking so, since almost every woman he has met since he was eighteen has been trying to marry him to herself or her daughter."

"And that being so, it seems incredible to you that he should make so humble a choice?" said Philippa good-naturedly, for, indeed, Brainard seemed to her to be talking most absurdly. "You are not flattering, Herbert. Do you really consider me so unlovable?"

"To a man like Dyson, utterly."

"How do you know what Mr. Dyson finds lovable?"

"Anyone who has ever seen him in the company of a certain Mrs. Mayburn can have no doubts on the subject."

"Really, Herbert, is it necessary to speak like that of the man I am going to marry?"

"But you are not going to marry him," returned Herbert with some force. "He is utterly unsuited to you. He would make you wretched. You don't love him. You are not so mercenary as to care for his money——"

"Ah, I'm not so sure," Miss Fane broke in. "Indeed, I'm sure of

nothing. It may be his money, it may be his position, it may be his queer little charm; I only know I live in a delightful unreality, that I am singularly happy, and that, foolish or not, I am going to marry him."

Mr. Brainard made no answer. He very deliberately picked up his hat and gloves and walked out of the room.

IV.

"It looks very compromising, doesn't it?" said Mrs. Mayburn, some weeks later, as she stepped lightly into Dyson's brougham, which was standing before her door. "Good-by, Percy. If anyone tells you they saw Dickie and me looking at tiaras together, explain that I am only acting in an advisory capacity upon the future Mrs. Dyson's wedding-present. Come along, Dickie. You know what a time it takes you to make up your mind.

"A month from to-day," she continued, leaning back in her corner and regarding him maliciously, as the brougham wheeled away, "you will be married. There's a thought to make your heart feel like a stone, and you've never been married before, either. Do you know, I've been overrun lately with morning visits from your old girls, who want to find out how you came to be so inconsiderate. Rose Seaton hopes it's all right, but really she never heard of the woman before, and even the nicest men do such queer things. And that pretty Mrs. Ashburton with the red hair thinks you looking a little worn, and hopes you haven't begun to repent already. I tell them all how delighted you are, and how I know, because ever since this 'great happiness came into your life,'—that is the correct expression, I think,—you have been coming to see me almost every day to consult about furnishing her rooms and all the wedding arrangements. This puzzles them dreadfully, especially when I add, 'Poor boy, he has no mother!'"

She herself had entirely got over any distaste for his marriage; indeed, she began to think he had grown more dependent on her since his enforced bondage to another woman.

"Now," she said, as they leaned over the jeweller's counter together, "I'm all for something large and splurgy. Lottie Burthen used to wear a wretched little diamond fence round her top curls, as if she were afraid they would escape to their original owner. If one wears a tiara at all, one wants everyone to notice it."

When at length they had selected one of a size to please even her taste, and had ordered many of the diamonds replaced by others more in accordance with Dick's fastidious ideas, the clerk politely suggested that perhaps it would be more satisfactory to try it on, indicating at the same time the little private office. Mrs. Mayburn was unable

to resist removing her hat and placing it upon her own dark little head, with the result that Dick burst into exclamations of delight and admiration, followed by a whispered suggestion to which, when the clerk had discreetly withdrawn, she replied:

"Don't be absurd, Dick. In the first place, I have one already, as no one knows better than yourself; and, in the second, I don't think even Percy could fail to guess where I got it from, if I returned from this expedition with a tiara. No, this is for your bride."

Whereat Dick grumbled something about hating to see a beautiful thing where it would give him absolutely no pleasure, and she beamed on him with almost as much satisfaction as if she could have accepted it.

And then they wandered about the shop, each looking for some slighter token to present to the other as a remembrance of the day, and then they drove back and lunched with Percy. The afternoon was well advanced before Dick started to pay a visit to his fiancée.

The relation between Dick and Philippa continued to be faint in the extreme. If they had not been engaged, one would have said that the feeblest possible flirtation was going on between them. In fiction relations are always definitely labelled. Men and women are either friends or lovers, past, present, or to come. Little account is taken of such an attitude as Dick's. He thought Philippa a very nice and rather handsome girl, and would have heartily approved the choice of his best friend if such a one had been about to marry her. It never crossed his mind that with the most earnest endeavor he would be able to fall in love with her; and yet it was not in his nature to be thrown much with a good-looking woman and not make a certain sort of mild love to her. As for Philippa, like many people of a great deal of knowledge, she was deplorably lacking in experience. Most of the men she had known well were of the type of Brainard,—the type to which her most obvious self most naturally appealed,—hard-working young doctors and lawyers, who talked to her earnestly on "topics" which she ought to have found interesting, and which often bored her to death. These men had always made demands upon her, demands that she should be serious, demands that she should pay attention, and, finally, demands that she should love them. Therefore the very things in Dickie which ought to have made her distrust him delighted her,—that he always wriggled away like an eel from any "topic," and that he appeared to ask nothing whatsoever from her. He was amusing, he was considerate, he was polite, and, in her opinion, he loved her. It is not surprising that she was content with her view of him.

She was to be married from Mrs. Stainer's house. The wedding, in deference to Philippa's mourning and Dick's expressed wish, was

to be extremely quiet. This was easy enough to arrange as far as she was concerned, for she had scarcely a dozen acquaintances in New York, but for Dick it was a different matter. Philippa was constantly being called on to "write a little note inviting Mrs. Ashburton, a very old friend;" or to "Cousin Milly, whom he had met in the street, and who seemed so hurt at not having been included," until the list of those to be present grew tolerably long.

Among the earlier names upon it were those of Mr. and Mrs. Percy Mayburn. Philippa read them with something approaching a jealous pang as Herbert's words recurred to her; but it did not last long. Within a day Mrs. Mayburn floated in to see her, because "she really felt she must get to know dear little Dickie's wife, for, indeed, he had always been like a younger brother to herself and Percy, and it made them so happy to see him so happy. Percy had said to her only the other day that it quite reminded him of their own engagement,—Miss Fane must know her Percy,"—and so on until Philippa, half yielding to the charm, half in the spirit of discovery, revealed jestingly Herbert's definition of what Dickie found "lovable," and they smiled together over its unlikelihood, and sighed over the ill-natured stupidity of the world. "So many years older than he as I am," Mrs. Mayburn had said, looking suspiciously childish, "but you'll find the difference, my dear! All the women who have had a sentiment for him—they are so many, you know, not that he ever cared a button—won't want to know you better. They hate you already, the cats!"

Philippa recounted some of this conversation to Dick.

"Wasn't it nice of her, Dickie?" she said, but Dickie only grunted without enthusiasm.

She accused herself at this time of a sadly light-minded attitude towards the momentous step she was about to take. She did not need to be reminded that marriage is a serious thing, and certainly she was a serious person; yet far from ruminating upon the holy state, she found her mind quite taken up with her wedding present, Dickie's foolish jokes, her trousseau, and all the many details requiring her attention.

Even on her wedding morning she was able to dress with the greatest calm, helping the maid fasten on her veil and wreath with fingers that did not tremble, and to derive a justifiable satisfaction from the result. Fortunately, she did not know in how different a manner the toilette of her bridegroom was progressing.

With many people depression knows no expression but in irritability, and on this morning Dickie, in the language of Reed, the valet, was "beyond the beyonds." The only pair of socks he cared to wear on this occasion was not forthcoming. "In the wash, I suppose," he remarked, with a withering glance at his unfortunate servant. The

soles of his shoes were not blackened. "So like you, Reed, the only time in my life when I'm likely to show my soles." And, worst of all, there was, he declared, absolutely no starch in any of his shirts. He had already tried on and discarded eleven, when his best man knocked on his door. Reed admitted him with an air of mingled relief and apology. The room presented something the appearance of a Connecticut tobacco-field,—everything was hidden under billows of white linen.

"Oh, come in, West," Dyson exclaimed, "come in, though God knows when I shall be dressed! Feel these shirts, will you? Wouldn't you think they were pillow-cases? Does the laundress suppose I keep her to rough-dry my clothes? She can do better when she likes too. There is one there that's like a board, only it shines like a barber's assistant's. She is a treasure, she is! Reed found her for me. He says the weather has been damp lately. As if a woman of any common sense wouldn't know that that was exactly the time I needed my shirts stiff! By Heaven!" he went on, suddenly seizing the one he had on by the middle of the back and flinging it from him,—"by Heaven, that is the worst of all!"

"You'll be late, Dickie," said his friend gently.

"And what if I am?" Dick roared. "They can't go on with the ceremony without me. Give me a shirt, Reed. Can't you see I'm in a hurry?"

"There is no more, sir," returned Reed, with the calm of despair.

"No more! Now where the devil have they gone to, Reed? Does that woman wear them herself? Didn't I get two dozen more than I needed only last month?"

"Well, there's seventeen in the wash, sir, and five at the Racquet Court, and I don't know rightly how many at the Club——"

"There, there, Reed, do you suppose that this is the moment I want to do a sum in arithmetic. Hand me that shiny one. I shall look like a porcelain bath-tub, but it can't be helped."

"Surely, Dick," said Mr. West earnestly, "you are not going to wear a purple tie. It looks like mourning. You know you ought to have a white one."

"Maybe I should, but I don't happen to have such a thing."

"Begging your pardon, you have, sir," Reed contradicted politely, drawing the desired article out of the chaos of the top drawer. "I bought it for you with my own hands yesterday." Dickie snatched it out of his hands.

"Oh, very well then," he said crossly. "I particularly did not want to wear a white tie, but I suppose there's no escape. No, Reed, I will not have that pearl. I shall wear the little ivory skull. You don't know where it is? Well, fortunately, I do. Bad luck? How can

you have any luck, good or bad, when you're once married? There, I suppose we may as well be starting," and Dick burst out of his room and downstairs, Reed trotting along beside him in the effort to fasten a bunch of lilies-of-the-valley in his button-hole.

All the way in the cab he sat holding his head in his hand, vouchsafing no other explanation than that he had a toothache. West breathed a sigh of relief when they were actually standing before Mrs. Stainer's mantel-piece (which was entirely concealed by palms in honor of the day) and Dickie had snapped out his first "I will."

For a few minutes after the ceremony Philippa found herself the centre of a congratulatory circle. The first thing that struck her was the fact that in it she recognized no familiar faces whatsoever, but later she saw, hovering in the background, the countenances of her own few friends, who were apparently too much overwhelmed by the good clothes and assurance of Dickie's acquaintance to dare to penetrate farther. And, indeed, Philippa herself found them a little overwhelming, from Mrs. Mayburn in apricot velvet to red-haired Mrs. Ashburton in turquoise cloth, and it occurred to her that for such very old friends they were all amazingly youthful in appearance. They were polite at first, but after one or two formal good wishes to the bride they turned their attention to the groom, and Philippa soon found herself entirely outside of the group which had gathered about Dick. She remembered to have pitied many a man at his own wedding for the utter neglect with which he was treated, but on this occasion the situation appeared to be reversed. A few left-over husbands attempted to enliven her solitude by suggestions that the weather was pleasant and the house admirably decorated, but her replies were often drowned in the bursts of merriment that were going on at her elbow.

Mr. Mayburn, who had perhaps too early entered into the full spirit of the day, kept repeatedly clasping her hand and assuring her that Dick was a capital fellow; but even this did not help her, for when she looked towards the capital fellow for rescue, she saw he was far too much occupied in receiving an enthusiastic kiss from a willowy blonde (whom she assumed must be "Cousin Milly") to notice her distress.

Herbert Brainard, however, was more alert. He now approached her with the remark that she appeared to have a great many charming relations-in-law. Philippa, whose attention was somewhat scattered, answered vaguely: "Why, what do you mean? There isn't a single relation of Dick's here, except the old dowager in purple."

"Indeed," said Herbert. "As far as I have seen, she is the only woman in the room except yourself who has not kissed him."

Philippa laughed. "What a hateful way of putting things you

have, Herbert," she said. "Don't you think, now that my marriage is an accomplished fact, that you might alter your opinion about it?"

"On the contrary, I am particularly desirous that you should be aware that my opinion is unaltered. It may be a comfort to you some day to talk the situation over with someone to whom your disappointment is no surprise."

Here a shout came from the group near by. "Oh, but of course I am to sit next you at breakfast, Dick,—the first woman you ever loved! When you were sixteen you told me what a hell it was to love a married woman."

"Oh, nonsense, Milly. The honor should be mine. He believed in *you*, but I first taught him to be cynical about the sex, and that's much more important!"

Herbert threw back his head, the better to sniff at such frivolity, but even as he did so his eye fell on Mrs. Ashburton, and he remained transfixed by her beauty.

At this moment Dick with some difficulty broke through the ring that surrounded him and approached his wife.

"Come along, Philippa," he said, "we must speak to Aunt Mary. She's a jolly good sort, and has come two hundred miles to attend our wedding." The next moment, having kissed the old lady on both cheeks, he was addressing her as follows:

"Oh Polly, Polly, to think of your sitting sulking in the corner just because I've been and gone and got another girl."

Aunt Mary patted Philippa's hand. "My dear," she said, "I'm glad to see you. You look as if you had plenty of character, and you will need all you have. Dickie is nothing but a boy, and a rather spoilt boy at that, but he is at least a gentleman, and will not make you a bad husband, I dare say, if you never let him see that you are fond of him."

"Wouldn't it be a better way not to be fond of him?" Philippa asked, smiling.

"Oh, much better, but, unfortunately, you won't accomplish it."

"Oh, I don't know," the girl returned, "I think it might be managed." She looked quizzically at her better half, whose glance wavered, and who appeared immensely relieved at the announcement of breakfast.

Philippa found breakfast extremely entertaining. Her guests seemed less noisy and more amusing when she was included in their merriment, and seated between Dick and Mr. West she was in the very midst of things. She derived no slight satisfaction too from the observation of Herbert, who, exactly opposite to her, by the side of Mrs. Ashburton, his face wreathed in smiles, afforded a perfect example of a gentleman diverted against his will.

When at last all was over, and she came running downstairs in her travelling-dress, the ordeal of departure turned out to be much less severe than she had expected. She was, indeed, scarcely observed, because everyone of any spirit was too much engaged in stuffing rice down Dickie's collar to trouble over her, and she escaped to the carriage without adventure.

Leaning back in their separate corners, they drove for some time in silence, until Philippa had begun to be curious as to the words in which he would first address her. At length, finding his inanimate profile somewhat irritating to contemplate, she was ill-advised enough to be the first to break the silence.

"Well," she said, "how do you feel?"

Dick turned his head still farther away to observe a high-stepping horse that was passing before he answered,—

"Oh, just about as I expected to feel after so much champagne and religion at such an early hour."

V.

A LADY and gentleman were sitting at a table in a Boston hotel. The gentleman was reading a paper, the lady twirling a menu between her thumb and forefinger. When at length soup appeared and the paper was laid aside, conversation did not seem to flourish any better.

"Anything in the paper?" the lady said.

"Nothing."

"Enough to occupy your mind during the last half hour."

"Well, one must have something to amuse one, you know."

The lady yawned. "So I used to think," she said.

"Shall I send our waiter for a paper for you?"

"Why, yes, if you don't feel any symptoms of becoming more entertaining."

"I thought one of the advantages of matrimony was that there was at least one woman in the world you did not have to entertain."

"Really? I thought one of its disadvantages was that there was at least one woman in the world whom it was not safe to bore."

The gentleman folded the paper back at the article he had been reading, and, propping it against the tureen, continued its perusal.

Such were Mr. and Mrs. Richard Dyson two weeks after their marriage.

For the first few days Dickie had exerted himself to please, with a high sense of duty if not very spontaneously. But he was not equal to sustained effort. He had always had exactly what he wanted, especially in the matter of playmates, and now, in the fell grasp of adverse circumstance, he grew first restless and then morose. For a little while Philippa made an effort to make up for his deficiencies, supposing that

no one would wilfully appear so unresponsive if he could help it, but she soon found that the more of the conversation she supported, the more was left to her to support, and she was at length allowed to sustain the full burden of their mutual entertainment. To rack your brains for topic after topic for the delectation of a person who is always too lazy or too ill-tempered to pursue them is enough to try the most amiable, and at the end of these two weeks Philippa was as sulky a young woman as you could wish to see. On the other hand, Dick, irritated with her for not being content, and very sorry for himself, would do nothing to appease her, and in the last days of their honeymoon it had become almost a point of honor with each of them not to be the first to address the other. The idea occurred to her with considerable force that this was not the manner in which even the most capricious and original nature would manifest affection, but not being able to find any other reason for his marriage, and not being accustomed to look upon herself as unlovable, she could not give the theory of his indifference her full belief, while the fact that she was not in love with him herself saved her from the necessity of examining their relation more closely. She was angry at him for permitting her to be so bored, and contemptuous of him for appearing so badly.

Matters mended, however, on their return to town, where they saw each other so little that they found it easier to be agreeable when they met. Dick, with some vague ideas on the responsibility of wealth, was in the habit of spending the morning closeted with his secretary. In the afternoon he rode in the Park, and ended at the Club, or so he led his wife to believe, while Philippa, delighted with a carriage of her own, came home only just in time for tea. Every afternoon she would find the hall table littered with cards. She could not complain that Dick's friends neglected her. They dined out almost every evening, and one of the rare times when they were sure of seeing each other alone was during the few minutes in the brougham on their way to and fro.

On these occasions they became quite cordial and pleasant. Dickie had so completely relapsed into his old habits that he was conscious of no matrimonial restraints, and, meeting with no reproaches, had contrived to forgive her for being his wife. Besides, a good maid and unlimited pin-money had, to his fastidious eyes, changed Philippa from a merely good-looking into an unusually handsome woman. Although to hear her constantly admired did not incline him to fall in love with her, it at least put him in an excellent temper with her; and she, new to diamonds and gayety and wholesale flattery, found her life so pleasant that she could not fail to be grateful to her husband. The only drawback to her happiness was that as he grew pleasanter she became more and more desirous of being sure that he loved her, and

less and less able to persuade herself that such was, or ever had been, the case. If on her honeymoon she had found it hard to maintain her belief in his love when he was forever gloomily present, she now found it even harder, when he was so frequently absent and so delightfully agreeable when they were together.

The truth of the matter was that Philippa only needed the extra sensitiveness engendered by a desire for Dick's affection to realize that she had never possessed it. With most women, the step is a short one from admitting a man's indifference to discovering the object of his love. Philippa began to think a good deal about Mrs. Mayburn and Herbert's unmistakable assertion about her. She was not in the least jealous, but she thought, in her own words, that it would be so much nicer for Dick to be fond of her than of anyone else.

One afternoon she was, as usual, working her way down her list, leaving cards for those who had sent her wedding-presents. Her smart little brougham, drawn by the handsome pair of grays which Dick had given her, might have been seen throughout the afternoon wheeling in and out of the Avenue. It was quite late,—almost six o'clock,—when, having finished the L's, she debated whether she should go home to tea or begin the M's. Then, observing that Mrs. Mayburn's name stood next, she decided on the latter course, especially as she wished to ask the little lady to fill a place for her at an approaching dinner.

So, as soon as the footman had rung, she herself descended, and on being told that Mrs. Mayburn was out, she demanded a pencil and wrote a message on her card. As she turned to go, however, the mirror in the hall (a large one, such as Ida's soul loved) reflected a feather in her hat displaced. She stepped nearer to arrange it, and as she did so her eyes fell on a hat lying on the shelf below the glass. She scarcely needed the initials "R. D." in the crown to identify it as her husband's. She turned again to the man. "Mrs. Mayburn is out?" she asked for the second time.

"Yes, Madam," returned the man steadily. He was the same who had let Dickie in on a previous occasion, but he was now better trained to his work.

Philippa reëntered her carriage and gave the order, "home." On entering the house Salters informed her that Mr. Brainard was in the drawing-room, at the same time handing her a note, which, he said, had just come. It was in Dick's hand. She opened it and read:

"DEAR PHILIPPA: If I am not home, don't keep dinner back for me. A man from the West with whom I have business connections has arrived in town, and I may have to dine him at the Club. Sorry to leave you alone.

"R. D."

Philippa chuckled. "It's probably a great deal more fun, now he has a wife to deceive," she thought, "and yet something will have to be done about it." Aloud she said, "Mr. Dyson will not be at home for dinner." Then she went upstairs to the drawing-room.

Herbert, who never wasted a moment, was absorbed in some legal papers, but hastily folded them away as she entered, and, rising, regarded her critically. It was their first meeting since her marriage.

"Well?" he said.

"Most excellently well I thank you," she returned, sitting down and beginning to undo the furs from her throat. She was looking radiant in the excitement of the recent crisis.

"I'm delighted to hear it," said Herbert, looking particularly sour.

"Dear friend," murmured Philippa sentimentally.

"I have read of your doings in the paper."

"Wasn't that rather a light occupation, Herbert?"

He would not stoop to notice her mockery.

"Am I to suppose you actually enjoy the life you are leading?"

"Is it so strange that I should?" she answered. "Would not most women enjoy pretty rooms, pretty clothes, endless amusement, and an indulgent husband?"

"Most women. Pooh! I'm speaking of you. I had not supposed that two months could make you as frivolous as——"

"As Mrs. Ashburton?"

"Although," said Herbert severely, "I should never criticise a woman for frivolity who has been brought up to know nothing better, I may say in passing that you are very much mistaken in supposing the lady you mention to have no more serious side than that she usually presents. Even the day of your wedding, I could detect beneath all her raillery" ("Who but Herbert would use the word raillery?" thought Philippa) "that as a matter of fact she was unsatisfied, that she was far from being as light-minded as——"

"As I am?"

"As her companions."

"Ah, dear me, yes," said Philippa, throwing back her head and yawning slightly, "I forgot. Lily Ashburton is discontented. Lead a perfectly worthless life, do nothing but amuse yourself, and if you complain bitterly of it, everyone will think you respectably serious, but if you once allow it to be seen that you are content, why, then, your oldest friend comes to see you, and will do nothing but scold you for your frivolity." She turned suddenly to him and smiled in a way that caused his heart to turn to water within him. He could not know, poor young man, that he was but an understudy, that she was merely trying her hand against the future subjection of her husband. He drew his chair close to hers.

"Philippa," he said solemnly, "I cannot believe you content. I know the busy intellectual life you used to lead among intelligent companions. What have you now to compensate you? Your husband is notoriously indifferent to you, his friends are empty-headed fools, his——"

"I'm sorry my friends don't meet with your approval, Mr. Brainard," said Dickie, sauntering into the room with his hands in his pockets. "I'm afraid that can't be helped, but as to your first assertion, you may tell your informants, with my compliments, that it is a lie. Give me some tea, please, Philippa."

"It's not a term I'm in the habit of using without strong provocation, Mr. Dyson," returned Herbert stiffly.

"Then let me recommend it to your use the next time you hear the assertion that I do not love my wife," Dickie answered distinctly, "and if the speaker has ever had the pleasure of seeing her, you may add, a damned unintelligent lie too."

"It gives me great pleasure to hear you say this," said Herbert.

This speech appeared to infuriate Dick almost beyond the bounds of his endurance. He turned to Brainard as if he could have killed him, but, conquering himself with an effort, he answered insolently,—

"In that case, of course, I am more than compensated for any distaste I may have felt for discussing my private affairs with a stranger."

"It is a discussion," said Brainard, "which I did not begin, and which I have no wish to continue. Good-by, Philippa." She took his outstretched hand, and he was allowed to depart without more words.

As soon as he was gone, Dick sat down and became absorbed in the evening paper. Philippa walked to the piano and stood idly striking chords while the men were taking away the tea-things. When they were gone she said, as if nothing had happened,—

"So the man from the West let you off."

"As you see," Dick answered, quite unconscious that she did not in the least believe him. As a matter of fact, he was speaking the truth. His business friend had not accepted his invitation to dine, although it is possible that Dick would not have thought it necessary to mention the fact if Ida Mayburn could have kept him to a tête-à-tête meal instead of going out to a long-standing engagement.

There was a pause, and then Philippa remarked good-humoredly,—

"It was very nice of you to perjure yourself so politely just now for my sake."

From behind the paper a grunt issued which might have been interpreted as "Not at all."

"Though I don't know," Philippa went on thoughtfully, still to a slow accompaniment on the keyboard, "that I ought to thank you. I believe it was just an exhibition of the primitive masculine instinct

that won't have another man commenting on his possessions, whether he values them or not."

"I really do not know why you assume——"

"There, my dear boy, don't, I beg of you, deny it," said Philippa, who had resolved on a policy in regard to her husband the first step of which was to make him feel perfectly free. "While it still lasted you will do me the justice to admit that I did my best to conceal from you how irksome I found your affection. You must not be hurt, it was not yours especially,—I mean, it would have been the same whoever it was." (She turned her head away to hide her smile at the speechless astonishment on Dick's face as he heard the sentiments attributed to him.) "I'm afraid," she went on with the most winning gentleness, "that even on our honeymoon I used to hurt your feelings. I saw you were often depressed, but honestly, Dick, I could not help it. I know you made very few demands on me, considering how dearly you loved me" (Dick gave a gasp), "but, still, I felt oppressed, tied down, by the responsibility of your feeling for me." She stood looking into the fire with sad, self-reproachful eyes. An excellent actress was lost in Philippa. "Perhaps I was unkind. Perhaps I wounded you unnecessarily. I was not really ungrateful, only now that you have come to a more rational state of mind, I am so very much happier. Can't you understand that?"

Philippa paused, feeling that she had probably accomplished her object, which was threefold,—to make Dick feel that she would be a difficult woman to win, to assure him that he was under no obligations to win her, and to try to persuade him that her former efforts to be nice to him had arisen only from a sense of duty.

Dick now stood up. A variety of expressions had crossed his face, among which alternate relief and annoyance were most conspicuous, but he said nothing.

"I should think," said Philippa, leaning her elbow on the mantel-piece and regarding her pretty little shoes,—“I should think that the situation would be rather difficult when both parties were in that super-sensitive, over-excited state called ‘in love,’ but when it is only one—you know I told you I was not in love before I accepted you, Dick. However, you'll see how much happier we shall be, how much nicer you will find me now that I am not forever oppressed by the idea that you are in love with me.”

"How do you know that I was so crazy about you?" Dick asked rather nervously.

She smiled indulgently at this fantastic suggestion. She was enjoying herself hugely.

"I'm afraid there is not subject for argument there," she answered.

"Then, if you are going to be so much nicer, how do you know you won't soon find me as troublesome again?"

She shook her head. "That sort of feeling, once gone, never comes back, fortunately."

"And you've quite made up your mind that there's never to be the slightest sentiment between us again?"

"Not the least little bit. You go your way, and I'll go mine. You will be surprised to see how much you like it."

Dick, who had been guiltily conscious of having gone his own way for some weeks, did not think of anything to answer, and she continued:

"Now, to begin with, I think you said you did not want to go to the Simkinses' this evening. Now, I do. You see how simple and easy my plan is. I merely ring the bell and order the carriage and go without you."

"Hold on a minute," said Dick; "I don't think it looks well for you to be going about without me when we have been married such a short time."

"My dear Dick, why should we care how it looks? If we please ourselves and each other, why trouble about anyone else? The brougham at half-past eleven, Thomas."

"If you go, I shall go with you."

"I'm sorry you feel like that," said Philippa. "It seems a pity you should bore yourself. Really, I'd give up going if I had not promised Herbert Brainard that I'd be there, and he is such a busy person that I hate to disappoint him."

"I think he would stand a little disappointing," her husband returned with a sniff. "And if I were you, Philippa, I don't think I should let him talk as he was talking when I came in just now."

"Wouldn't you, Dickie?" said Philippa gently. "Perhaps you are right. I am always so glad to have you make any suggestion."

Dick, who had not meant his speech exactly as a mere suggestion, did not answer, and she went on,—

"You must not think because you have no authority over me that I have not the greatest respect for your opinion."

"I don't know what the deuce you mean," answered Dick, who in his own mind attached a good deal of importance to the word "obey" in the marriage service.

"Why, I mean, of course, that now, if you were disagreeable or interfering or anything like that, now that you don't care so madly for me, I should feel quite free to leave you if I wished to; so now," she added, smiling, as she paused with her hand on the door, "now you know how to get rid of me if ever you want to." And she was gone.

Dick stood where she had been standing, looking at the fire. Then he kicked a log into place.

"Well, I'll be damned!" he said.

VI.

SO MUCH has been said about the machinations of wicked women that the possibility of machinations on the part of the more deserving members of the sex seems to be in a fair way to being forgotten altogether, and is not on that account less deadly. Indeed, it may safely be said that when a good woman makes up her mind to be designing, she is, if she have a fair share of brains, an infinitely more dangerous person than her more obviously unscrupulous sister. Thus, Philippa, with her noble expression, her habitual honesty, and clean record of frankness, was really in a much better position to bamboozle Dick than was Mrs. Mayburn, whom he already had reason to suspect of several minor deceptions.

Still, Rome was not built in a day, and for all the prosperity of Philippa's first step, she did not progress as rapidly as she had hoped. She knew quite well that she was more charming than before and that Dick found her so, yet she could not observe any appreciable difference in his habits. Indeed, as she now often went out in the evening without him, she actually saw less of him than before. Each move had been successful, and yet final success seemed as far off as ever.

She neglected no means by which she could make herself necessary to him. She took the greatest pains in the ordering of the house. She made him comfortable in many directions in which he had never appreciated his former discomfort. She was always well-dressed,—as well dressed as Ida Mayburn, which is saying a good deal. She took care to be surrounded in public by men whom Dick approved, while carefully avoiding the possibility of being seen conspicuously with anyone, knowing that nothing would antagonize a man like her husband so much as the bare idea of her making a fool of herself, as he would doubtless have expressed it.

Nevertheless, much remained to be done, and Philippa determined to do it. It was in a flash almost of genius that she decided to take away from Dick's meetings with Mrs. Mayburn the superlative charm of being clandestine. Her eyes had long ago been opened to the true nature of that lady's protestations of friendship for herself, and she resolved to use them for her own ends. She insisted upon becoming intimate, and Ida, who by this found herself constantly invited to the house and thrown with Dick, was nothing loth. At first Philippa had been almost dissuaded from this plan by the continual company of Percy which resulted for her, but she soon learned to add a third man to their parties, thus banishing Mr. Mayburn to an unnoticed back-ground, where he seemed wonderfully at home.

This new order of things surprised Dickie not a little, as his wife was the only woman he had ever known who had showed even the

feeblest desire for Ida's company. It was so strange that it made him a little uncomfortable.

"I did not know you were such an admirer of Mrs. Mayburn's," he said one day.

"Oh, but I am," Philippa answered with enthusiasm. "Aren't you? But I know you are. No one could help being. She is so wise, such a woman of the world, so nice to Percy, and so awfully amusing about him behind his back! She is such a help to me! I ask her advice on every conceivable subject, and she has so many ideas!"

A shade of embarrassment crossed Dick's face. "Why, I don't know," he said with a manner he would fain have rendered casual, "I don't know that I should accept her ideas on all subjects."

"How can you say so!" his wife cried. "After all, men are not as loyal as women. *She* always speaks so warmly of you. She has often told me that she and her husband looked upon you as a sort of younger brother." Dyson looked at her inquiringly, but the steady innocence of her gaze did not waver as she continued: "But then she is unusually large-hearted, the sort of person you can't help telling things to,—things," Philippa added with a self-excusing smile, "that you would not tell most people."

Dick turned quickly. "Look here, Philippa," he said, "let me warn you against discussing your private affairs with any woman——"

"Ah, but Ida is not like most women."

"Especially with Ida Mayburn," and as if to avoid further explanation, he went out of the room, slamming the door behind him.

Left alone, Philippa gave a sigh of relief. "Well, I'm glad to have found out one thing," she said; "at least he knows she is a cat."

One of the dangers of intimacy between the families Dyson and Mayburn which did not occur to Dick and Ida was the accurate information concerning the movements of Percy which Philippa now obtained. Perhaps Mrs. Mayburn was not able to imagine that anyone could derive any enlightenment from her husband, yet, nevertheless, Philippa had several times been able to foretell Dick's absences from his home by being forewarned of Percy's. These occasions, because expected, she found particularly trying to her temper.

One evening they were dining at the Ashburtons'. Philippa started out in an unusually happy frame of mind. She was wearing the tiara that had been selected for her with so much care, and Dick had paid her a number of compliments on her appearance. He had also taken her cloak from her maid under pretence of examining it, and had wrapped it round her himself, while he let fall the remark that height was really a requisite to good looks in a woman,—a speech which could not fail to please Philippa, both as a tall woman and the rival of a small one.

Therefore when Percy himself took her in to dinner, and soon mentioned in the course of conversation that he was going to attend a large public dinner on Wednesday, she felt particularly unprepared to meet the assertion, which she knew Dick would make as soon as they were alone, that he himself could not be at home on Wednesday.

She was seated, as she had been pretty sure she would be, next to her host, a large, good-looking young man, who, while adoring his wife, had never been able to get over the habit of enthusiasm for any handsome woman. Philippa was his latest admiration, and he was naturally pleased when she presently turned to him and asked him if he would come and dine with her on Wednesday.

"There'll be only Dick and me," she said, "perhaps not even Dick, for I have an idea he has an engagement." Needless to say, this possibility did not make Mr. Ashburton's acceptance any the less eager.

Driving home, she said to her husband with great sweetness,—

"Would you mind dining out on Wednesday, Dick?" She thought she felt him start slightly, but he did not at once commit himself.

"Why do you want me to?" he asked.

"Because I've asked Mr. Ashburton to come without his wife, and he is always so much more amusing when you aren't there. And, anyhow, two is a nicer number than three, don't you think?"

"You must be mad, Philippa. You can't dine alone with Ashburton."

"I don't know why not."

He did not even notice this. "The worst of it is," he went on with obvious hesitation, "that I *have* an engagement for Wednesday which I can't very well break."

Philippa clapped her hands, though she was conscious of a pang.

"Oh, that's capital!" she said. "I did not want to turn you out of your own house, but if you are going anyhow, it will be more cosy."

"*Cosy!*" Dick cried with some temper. "Upon my word, Philippa, you have the strangest ideas. You seem to assume that because we don't pretend to be madly in love with each other that I shall approve of your doing the most compromising sort of things."

"But my dining alone at home with Mr. Ashburton wouldn't be compromising,—you know it wouldn't, Dick. The nicest women do it. Even *Ida Mayburn* does—why, of course *you* know she does. Percy was telling me only the other day about an evening last winter when he was so sorry not to be able to get home to dinner,—it was their wedding-day,—and, when he did come, he was so pleased to find that she had sent for you, so that she wasn't alone."

There was a minute's silence, then Dyson said in a low growl,—

"I did not mean compromising, exactly."

"I was sure you didn't," his wife returned cordially.

They had stopped before their own door, and Dickie now kicked open the carriage-door with a violence that swept the little footman into the gutter. "On second thoughts," he said, "I believe that I shall be able to dine at home on Wednesday."

Philippa was standing under the hall-lamp, reading some letters that had come during her absence, and she did not answer. Dick looked at her with admiration, looked and looked, until finally he said,—

"Oh, I say, Phil, if you think three is such a dull number, put Ashburton off, and come and dine somewhere amusing with me."

Philippa's heart beat, merely, doubtless, with triumph. She almost accepted the invitation, and then wisdom conquered.

"Oh, thank you awfully, Dickie," she said, smiling as if he could not possibly have meant to be taken seriously, "but I think it's better not to put people off. Four is a good number, and I'll ask Ida to come in. Now that I remember, Percy mentioned that he was dining somewhere without her on Wednesday."

She was not able to judge of the result of her manœuvre, for Dick walked away to his study without speaking.

She went on upstairs, although as she did so her feet almost turned back of themselves to carry her down again to retract her refusal. To go "somewhere amusing to dine" with Dick sounded strangely pleasant, and, besides, she began to think it would be necessary to see more of her husband if her plan were to succeed. For, charm one never so wisely, it is not possible to charm a person whom one never sees. She longed to invade his every-day life, to be of use to him, to make him dependent on her; yet how could she? His mornings were spent with his secretary. His afternoon ride in the Park, which presented possibilities, was now given up, for since the approach of spring he went three times a week into the country for the hunting.

A few mornings afterwards Dick was in his study. He wondered why Brown did not come. (Brown was his secretary.) There was a great deal to be done, and he wanted to catch the one-thirty train to Meadow Rill, where his hunters were to meet him. He could never do it at this rate. He swung round in his chair and began tearing open envelopes, alternately throwing the contents on the floor and on the desk before him. The door opened. "You are confoundedly late, Brown," he said over his shoulder.

His wife's voice answered, "Brown has just telephoned that his mother is ill and he can't come."

Dick threw down the paper-knife. "Oh, very well, then," he said; "that puts an end to any chance of the run for me."

"I'm so sorry," said Philippa. "Couldn't I help you?"

Without looking up, he declined her offer with the elaborate politeness due to an officious imbecile.

"In that case," she said, "you won't mind my using the typewriter," and, suiting the action to the word, she sat down before the instrument, slipped in a sheet of paper, and was soon in the midst of her letter. She was, however, well aware that Dick had stopped reading and was watching her with surprise.

"Why, how did you come to be so awfully skilful?" he asked after a second.

"Done it" (click, click) "all my life" (click, click, click), she returned, directing the envelope.

"Well, if it wouldn't be an awful bore, if you haven't anything particular to do, I should be tremendously grateful if you would take a letter or so for me."

"Delighted. Go on."

"NEW YORK, March —.

"MR. Q. C. GIBSON:

"DEAR SIR: If I had not already gone into more copper mines than I should ever come out of in solvency, I should doubtless go into yours. As it is, I must decline your offer——"

"I don't think that is very civil," said Philippa.

Dick laughed. "I am not accustomed to my secretary's criticising my manners."

"Then, evidently," said Philippa, "I need something to make me an ideal secretary, and," she added gravely, "I think it must be a pair of paper cuffs." So saying she twisted a piece of white paper round each of her wrists, securing them with a pin. "That is it, of course. That was what was required to change me into a professional. I hope you will treat me with the greatest respect, remembering that I have seventeen little brothers and sisters to support, to say nothing of a drunken father, and that I am quite defenceless."

"I would not have you otherwise, believe me," replied Dick, entering at once into the spirit of the game.

"Oh Mr. Dyson, how can you? I see a respectable workingwoman cannot be too careful."

"Oh, indeed, she can, my dear. I've known them to lose business by it."

"You don't tell me so! Of course, being new to the profession, I am anxious to do whatever is usual."

"Then, believe me, it is customary to temper the respect with a little mild familiarity."

"How mild?"

"Oh, it begins about as mild as this," said Dick, putting his arm about her.

"Oh Mr. Dyson, you must have had a great many typewriters, and you a married man, sir!"

"But so little married, my dear. My wife cares nothing for me."

"Can that be!"

"She doesn't want me to care for her."

"You must be mistaken."

"No, indeed. Only see what I bought for her the other day and couldn't summon courage to give her for fear she would refuse it," and he dived into one of the lower drawers of his desk and drew out a little, glittering diamond bracelet.

"Refuse it! Would she be so foolish?"

"Yes, indeed, she would. She wouldn't have me make love to her at any price."

"Have you ever tried?"

"Why, yes,—after a fashion."

"Suppose you try again. Oh Dick, my hair! It's caught in your cuff-link."

Salters coughed discreetly from the door. He had never been more surprised in the course of his professional experience.

"Mrs. Mayburn is in the drawing-room, Ma'am," he said.

The laughter died out of Philippa's and Dick's faces, and they looked at each other steadfastly for an instant with a glance that would have revealed them each to the other had they had the quickness to understand or the courage to abide by their knowledge. But it is only in fiction that lives are altered by a look, and now Philippa said prosaically,—

"Oh, go and see her, there's a good boy, while I take off my cuffs."

Dick hesitated. "I have a lot to do," he said, paused a moment, and went.

Ida was standing in the middle of the room. She had always the effect, with her fluffy skirts, of being about to pirouette forward, instead of walking in a mundane way to meet you.

"Why," she cried, holding up her hands in exaggerated surprise, "this is an unusual piece of luck. Of course, I asked for your wife."

"It was she who sent me to speak to you."

"Well," said Ida flippantly, "there is no greater blessing than a credulous helpmate."

"I must take your word for it."

"Certainly, I am very much to be envied in Percy. I have seen many ladies of my acquaintance turn pale with envy at an unusual example of his confidence in me. But I had supposed you almost equally blessed. I have a letter from your wife inviting me to dinner on Wednesday, as she feared from something that Percy had said that I should be alone. I felt tempted to reply that if anyone was fool

enough to be left alone, I did not think it would be *I*, but I have now come to explain that I cannot accept her very kind invitation because, much to my regret,—let me see, shall my mother-in-law be coming, or do you think it would be wiser to be going out? and that reminds me, it is a long time since you and I dined together anywhere where we shouldn't."

"I suppose you wouldn't just as lief accept Philippa's invitation?" Dick said, not, as he was aware, very happily, but he did not know at what moment his wife might come in, and he wished to settle the matter.

Ida turned to him with a look of startled reproach. "Would *you* just as lief have me?" she said.

"Well," said Dick, "you know it was only last week that I was dining with you, and I'm rather afraid for your sake that your servants——"

"That's enough," cried Ida. "A man never begins to talk of appearances until he has begun to think of another woman."

"For Heaven's sake, Ida, be reasonable," he said, catching her hand and attempting to draw her to him, while she as firmly resisted.

"I won't accept your wife's invitation, I won't come here on Wednesday, and *that* for being reasonable," she answered, snapping the fingers of her disengaged hand in his face. And, of course, it was on this tableau that Philippa entered.

Dick was facing the door, and perceived instantly that she had seen everything, yet there was very little emotion visible on her face, none at all in her manner as she greeted Ida. Dick saw too with some anger that this exhibition of self-control was regarded by Ida as another grateful example of Philippa's obtuseness. He found himself wondering with some alarm how many times in the past he himself had made the same mistake. He could gather nothing from Philippa's bearing as she stood with bent head listening to her guest. Mrs. Mayburn had by no means recovered complete control of her voice as she explained that she had stopped for only a moment to say how sorry she was she could not dine with them on Wednesday. Philippa expressed her regret, but did nothing to detain her.

When the door shut after her, Dick held his breath in anticipation of a scene. He felt the moment was important. He wondered what his wife would say, what reproaches, what explanations would follow.

She said nothing. She came close to him, took his hand, laid the bracelet in it, and closed his fingers over it.

"It was only part of the game," she said.

Dick did not move. He looked down at his hand, and then very seriously at her. "Please keep it," he said.

She shook her head. "It was just part of the game, and the game's over."

"It was a very nice one," said Dick.

"I don't think we'll play at it any more," Philippa answered gravely.

VII.

THE next morning, while Dick was dressing for breakfast, a tap came on his door, and he heard the voice of Philippa's maid in conversation with Reed. He was not a little surprised to learn that she brought a message from Philippa to say she would be glad to speak to him before he went out. It was an off day as far as hunting was concerned, and he had made arrangements to spend the day in the country with a man who had a hunter for sale.

Philippa was sitting in a little morning-room that opened out of her bedroom. She was wrapped in a white dressing-gown trimmed with fur, for though it was late in March, the day was as cold as midwinter. Her chair was drawn near the fire, and her breakfast, which she was still discussing, stood on a small table beside her. The fierce March sun shone in at the window and flashed on the glass and silver on the tray.

"Good-morning, Dickie," she said pleasantly, laying down the morning paper with a last, lingering look. "I remembered that you were going out of town to-day, and I could not be sure whether or not I had told you that I wouldn't be here when you came back."

Within the last twenty-four hours Dick had realized with some force that his knowledge of his wife's character was extremely limited and not very correct. The example of self-control which he had witnessed the day before persuaded him alternately of her lack of feeling and her strength of mind. He had devoted a great deal of thought to the matter, and had only ended in discarding every theory he could formulate, while a haunting idea which he could not discard was that under any hypothesis his wife must despise him. Now contempt was a feeling that Dickie was not accustomed to think of himself as arousing, and the notion was disagreeable. He now had no idea how significant her announcement of departure might be, so he said cautiously,—

"Why, where are you going?"

"I'm going home to see my uncle. I have always promised that I would come out during the winter or spring. He has been so lonely since my mother's death."

"I hope you won't be gone long," Dick said.

Philippa smiled politely. He never knew whether it were with conscious or unconscious malice that she always treated his pretty speeches as if they were the merest necessary formalities. He only knew that the habit annoyed him intensely.

"Oh, thank you," she now answered. "I doubt if I'm gone longer than three weeks or a month."

"I call that a very long time indeed."

"If you think you will want to make the move to the country before that, I can come back, of course, but I had rather supposed——"

"I have no desire to move to the country, and I should think I might be permitted to wish for your return on other grounds."

"I don't seem to know what others," his wife replied meditatively. "I believe the servants will take very good care of you. They have hitherto, and I hope I have not demoralized them so much that they won't in future."

"Oh, very well, then," said Dick crossly, "if you insist on my regarding you as a sort of housekeeper——"

"And in what character would you prefer to regard me?" Philippa asked, rising slowly and looking gravely at him. Dick decided on a bold stroke.

"Why, upon my word, Philippa, there have been times when we got on very well together. Why should you not be my friend?"

"Because I'm your wife," Philippa returned without an instant's hesitation, and as she spoke she leaned over and laid her finger on the bell. "Forgive my sending you away, but I must dress. My train goes at one."

Dick obediently went away, but went with food for reflection.

"Because I'm your wife." Did that mean that she knew too much about him, that respect at least was necessary to friendship, and this she could not give, owing to her unfortunately intimate knowledge of his conduct? Or did it mean that, bound to him against her inclination, longing, perhaps, for liberty, she was not able to judge him justly? Or could it by any possibility mean that, being his wife, friendship was not enough for her?

He spent a great part of the morning considering. He missed his first train. He found himself wandering a good deal about the halls in the neighborhood of his wife's door, but though her maid with her arms full of tissue-paper and clothes kept running in and out, no glimpse of Philippa was vouchsafed him.

At last he flung himself into a hansom, and told the man to drive him to the ferry, but when he got there he suddenly changed his mind, and, poking his stick through the trap door, he said, "Take me to the Grand Central Station, and drive fast."

If Philippa's train started at one, he had a fair chance to see her again before she left. It was fitting, it was almost a duty, to see one's wife off safely on such a journey. The driver might think him mad, but the voice of duty spoke extraordinarily loudly. They were blocked by a trolley-car and a coal-cart, and though Dick swore repeatedly and squirmed from side to side of the hansom, he did not hasten their progress. As they clattered up to the station the clocks pointed to one

minute before one. He dropped out and rushed into the building. "Show your ticket," said the man at the gate. Dick explained, the man hesitated, a bell rang, and the one o'clock train began to move slowly out of the yard.

Dick returned to his deserted house in a very bad temper.

He could not know that Philippa had sat with her eyes fixed on the mirror opposite to her, watching each new-comer in the car, and when it began to glide out of the station she shut her eyes—the tunnel is so smoky—and said to herself: "Why did I even let him know what train I was going to take! If he had really been in the least sorry I was going, he might have come to see me off. I shall stay at least a month."

Her uncle welcomed her with open arms. He had always loved and admired her, and, simple democrat that he was, he could not help loving and admiring her more now that he found himself a little dazzled by her money and position. He was very proud of her and delighted that she had come, but with Philippa herself the visit was not as successful as she had meant it to be.

All through the winter she had been vaguely intending to go to her uncle for a visit, and when, after the scene she had witnessed between Dick and Mrs. Mayburn, she had made up her mind to get away from New York for a time, she believed she could be perfectly happy in the city of her birth. She had at once telegraphed her wish to her uncle and received a cordial answer. Yet now that she was actually with him, she was far from happy. She had spoken to Dick of this house as home, and yet, now that she was in it, she was conscious of a feeling that bore some resemblance to homesickness. Nothing seemed as pleasant as she had expected it to be. A month, she reflected discontentedly, was a tremendously long time.

One day, about a week after her arrival, she thought that release in a creditable form had come. She received a letter from Dickie, running as follows:

"DEAR PHIL: Where do you get cooks? Ours has left. Salters used to get me mine, but he always got poor ones, otherwise I wouldn't bother you. This upheaval was not exactly my fault. I came home the other evening about eleven, and rang steadily for fifteen minutes without any result. I thought I had forgotten my key, but afterwards I found it in my pocket and let myself in. There wasn't a servant in the house. I knew you would not approve of that. (Salters was away on a holiday, so don't blame him.) I sat on the stairs and waited and caught them one by one as they came in, and when I had herded them all in my study, I went in and told them what I thought of them. All the women wept except the cook, and she said she wasn't accustomed to the

master's interfering in the house. Oughtn't I to have? It seemed the right thing to do. Anyhow, she left the next day. I wish it had been the laundress!

"I have been awfully bored since you went away. When are you coming back? Yours, "R. D."

This interesting connubial epistle gave Philippa pleasure. Was Dickie really bored, and had her absence anything to do with it? She began to think it was plainly her duty to return and deal with the cook question. She was already counting out ten words on her fingers for a telegram to convey this intelligence, when her eye happened to light on the following New York item in the local paper:

"MRS. PERCY MAYBURN, who has been spending a week at Aiken, returned to town to-day."

The dulness of Dickie's week instantly wore a different aspect in Philippa's eyes, and she remembered that he had merely inquired the date of her return, he had not pressed it. Her determination altered. She telegraphed for a cook to be sent to him, and wrote him a few lines to say that she had tried to arrange for his comfort. She could not say when she should be back. She was enjoying herself immensely.

It was unfortunate that her uncle should have selected this very evening to say at dinner, with just a suggestion of hesitation in his voice,—

"Have you ever met a Mrs. Mayburn in New York?"

"Indeed I have," returned Philippa, determined to have the satisfaction of expressing her opinion for once, "and a more thoroughly capricious, insincere, small-minded woman I never met."

"Well, well, you surprise me," said her uncle. "She was out here not long ago, and I thought she was a very sweet person."

"I'm sure you did, most of your sex would say the same thing, 'quite persuaded that the Apostles would have done as they did;' and so, I dare say, they would, holy men, as I understand, being no less gullible than others."

"Why, upon my word, Philippa," said her uncle, "you sound to me as if you were jealous. Is the lady a friend of Dick's?"

"She has often assured me that she looked upon Dick as a younger brother," returned Philippa curtly.

We all know what it is to stay away from home unwillingly; to have no compensation for being suddenly cut off from all our small habits and occupations; to face long stretches of morning and afternoon and evening which can only be filled by conscious effort. As days went by, Philippa did not grow more content. Even Antoinette, the maid, began to pine for the metropolis, and to sigh deeply as she fastened Philippa's gowns.

At length, when release came, it was in a dubious form. At breakfast her uncle suddenly laid down the paper, and said with an elaborate indifference,—

“Have you heard from your husband lately?”

“No,” said Philippa faintly. “Is he dead?” But in her heart she thought it much more probable that he had run away with Ida Mayburn.

“Dead! of course not,” said her uncle. “He has had a trifling accident in the hunting-field. Read it for yourself.”

He threw the paper across the table to her. She read:

“RICHARD DYSON INJURED AT MEADOWRILL.

“HORSE OF THE MULTIMILLIONAIRE FALLS WITH HIM AT A FENCE.

“INJURIES SAID NOT TO BE SERIOUS.

“MR. DYSON RESTING QUIETLY.”

“Of course, you will go home at once,” said her uncle. “I’ll order the carriage in time for that morning train, if you think you can be ready.”

“Oh, I’ll be ready,” said Philippa quickly. “You know, if necessary, Antoinette can stay behind and pack.”

But Antoinette had no more intention of being left behind than her mistress had, and they both arrived at the station in plenty of time.

It was not to be supposed that Philippa’s mind was at rest on the journey. She wondered first whether the papers had not made too light of Dick’s injuries, until her anxieties were relieved by a telegram from Salters in answer to one of her own. Then she fretted because she feared it would appear undignified for her to be hurrying home without any suggestion on his part. In fact, she did not know whether to wish him so seriously hurt that his servants would have to send for her, or to be unhappy that he had been hurt at all.

As her carriage drew up before the door she saw the Doctor coming out. He was a tall, middle-aged man, very blank in expression, very piercing as to eye.

“How is my husband?” she asked, jumping out of the carriage.

“Better than he deserves and not as bad as he will be, if someone doesn’t look after him,” was the reply. “I never had a more difficult patient. If I admit he is better, he gets up and goes out. If I don’t say so, he gives up all hope of recovery.”

“Is he seriously hurt?”

“Not at all. He has wrenched his knee. If he were more amenable to reason, I should have him up on the sofa, but if I told him that, he’d be on a horse within an hour. You must make him understand

that he must obey my instructions, Mrs. Dyson. In short, if you can amuse him without exciting him, keep him quiet without irritating him, and make him understand the gravity of his position without depressing him, you will have him out in ten days, I have no doubt. Good-morning." And the Doctor dived into his brougham and was whirled away.

"I could easier teach twenty what were good to be done than be one of the twenty to follow mine own teaching," thought Philippa, but she went upstairs with a light step.

As she approached the half-open door of Dick's room she heard the voice of Reed, who was evidently attempting to entertain the invalid with selections from his personal experience:

"And when the Capt'ing was half-seas over, as you might say, sir," he was saying, "I did not wish the Viscountess for to see him, and I had for to take him up the back stairs, and them was the narrowest and twistingest stairs that ever I did see——"

"Philippa!" cried Dick, throwing out a welcoming hand.

He was lying in bed, attired in the most beautiful set of light-blue silk pyjamas that the mind of haberdasher could devise. His curly hair had lost every trace of a part and he looked younger than usual. His room was singularly neat and a jar of roses stood on a table.

"Why, how fine you are," said Philippa. "I think Reed takes very good care of you."

"Oh, we are not always as fine as this," Dickie answered, exchanging a conscious look with his man. "When I heard that you were coming I sent Reed out to get that chair for you to sit in—there isn't a comfortable chair in this room—and those flowers, and other things I forget."

"Maybe you was thinking of the pyjamas, sir," said Reed, who was justly proud of his taste. Dick cast a look of contempt at him and continued to address his wife.

"I wondered if you would come," he said. "I was going to send for you, and then I thought it would be selfish when you were having such a nice time as you had said in your letter, and I knew you would see about it in the paper and could come if you liked."

"Of course I liked," said Philippa. "Poor Dickie! I was so sorry to hear of your being knocked up."

"My dear girl," replied Dickie, "there is nothing the matter with me in the world except being kept in bed. If they would let me get up, I'd be all right, but, naturally, after I've lain in bed for days and days I get a cramp in my knee, and then they say: 'There, now, see how ill you are. You must stay in bed at least ten days longer.' Well, I've been very docile so far, but I sha'n't be much longer. I shall keep quiet until Saturday,—I don't mind missing Wednesday's run,—and then I shall get up."

"Richard," said Philippa firmly, "you may as well give up saying what you will and will not do. I have come some distance to take care of you. I promised at the altar to cherish you in sickness, and my idea of doing so is to bully you outrageously. If I think it is well for you to stay in bed, in bed you stay."

Dickie thought a moment, then he said:

"All right, I'll be good on one condition,—that you keep me amused. The instant I'm bored I get up. You will have to sit beside me and read to me, and (you may go, Reed; I'll ring if I want anything) it may even be necessary for you to make violent love to me without the slightest encouragement on my part."

"Oh, I can't do that," she answered. "I am under contract not to. The day we became engaged,—you remember, the day you told me about your peculiar disposition, and the way it affected you to be loved,—well, that very day I promised never to love you, you know."

"I think my disposition has changed," said Dickie, looking up at her from under a thatch of untidy hair. "I am about to release you from that promise."

"Oh, dear me, don't do that," said Philippa. "I'm afraid that the habit of not loving you is formed, and habits are so difficult to break at my age."

"Very well," her husband replied obstinately, "I don't know what is to be done. I won't be good, nor take any of these hateful medicines, nor do anything the Doctor says unless you pretend to love me."

"Oh, nobody said anything about *pretending*," she answered gayly. "If that's all you want, I will begin at once. I will say that I have been unhappy and homesick ever since I have been away from you; that, try as I would, I could think of nothing else; that, far from being sorry, I was glad, radiantly glad, when I read of your accident, because it gave me an excuse to come back to you, as"—she took his hand and kissed it—"as my heart desired. Will that pretending do?"

"Philippa," said Dick earnestly, "I will keep quiet forever if you will talk like that to me."

VIII.

THE rest of the day was very happy for Philippa. She found herself blessed with the sudden ability to charm. She had her luncheon on a tray beside his bed, to the horror of the new cook and the stern disapproval of Salters. They talked and laughed like children until about five o'clock, when it began to occur to her that Dick was growing a trifle abstracted. She wondered if his knee had of a sudden become more painful, but just as she was about to ask the question, Salters knocked to say that Mrs. Mayburn was downstairs.

A strange expression came over Dick's face, not unlike that of a puppy who has been caught rifling the larder, and rifling it, more-

over, of distasteful contents. Philippa felt, however, that she rose perfectly to the situation when she said:

"Perhaps as she is such an old friend she would not mind coming up here to see you. You'd like to see her. Salters, ask Mrs. Mayburn if she would mind coming up to Mr. Dyson's room. I'm sure," she added, with an effort to be pleasant, "you look beautiful enough to receive the Queen of England if she should happen to come to inquire after your health."

An instant later there was a rustle of skirts on the stairs, and Ida fluttered into the room. She was, it appeared, so glad to see Philippa back that she scarcely noticed Dick at first.

"So glad to see you among us once more. How is your invalid? You must have been so anxious about him. Awfully good of you to let me come up. How are you, Dick?"

"Better," said Dick in a growl. The kitchen cat, who had lately repudiated the kitchen, was curled up on a chair beside him, and Dick gave all his attention to it.

"You really look very well, in spite of the way the papers have been alarming your friends. Do tell me just how it happened, Dick? I have been so anxious to know."

Why, Philippa wondered, did Dick look so uncomfortable? Why did he not answer? In the pause, Salters again knocked, and now entered with a card-case on a salver.

"You left this behind you yesterday, Madam," he said with splendid calm, as if ignorant of the bomb he was exploding in the apparently friendly group.

Dick grew crimson, but continued to stroke the cat from the tip of its nose to the tip of its tail. Philippa succeeded in looking merely supercilious. As for Ida, if glances could kill, Salters would not have lived to walk, as he now did, with deliberate dignity out of the room.

Ida quickly recovered herself. "I suppose Dick told you," she said, "how Percy and I stopped for a minute yesterday to see how he was, and whether we could do anything for him in your absence."

"Yes, indeed, he did," Philippa returned sweetly, although it was perfectly well known to all three of them that Percy had returned only that very day from Aiken. "Dick was so much touched by your kindness, especially Percy's, whom he had thought otherwise occupied. Perhaps you would not mind crowning your good deeds by sitting with Dick a little while so that I may feel free to go for a short walk. I should be very much gratified to have you take my place," and without waiting for an answer to her somewhat ambiguous speech, she left the room. No hum of conversation seemed to arise on her departure.

It was a lovely afternoon. Philippa turned towards the Park, and there sat on a bench. She did not think. She did not want to

think. She was only conscious of a firm resolve that she would never, never, never be more than decently civil to her husband again. Indifference she could stand, she said, but not deceit. She did not consider that she had stood indifference only since she had begun to doubt its existence.

At the end of an hour she returned. On the steps she passed Ida. They smiled and nodded without speaking. Philippa, if she could have stooped to comment on such a subject, would have said that Ida had been crying.

When, about eight o'clock, Dick summoned courage to send word that he would be glad to speak to his wife for a moment or two, he was told that Mrs. Dyson had taken her maid and gone to the theatre. He desired that a message should be given to her the instant she came in to the effect that he must speak to her before she went to bed.

About twelve, finding that she did not come, he sent the unfortunate Reed to discover the reason, and learned that Mrs. Dyson had come in an hour ago, and had said that as it was so late she would not trouble him to speak to her until the morning.

For a moment Dick was blindly angry. He felt strongly tempted to send Reed to knock on her door until she woke up, and to tell her that if she did not come within ten minutes he would get up and, leaning all his weight on his game leg, would go to find her. Respect, however, for her supposed slumbers restrained him.

But Philippa was very far from asleep. A new change had come upon her. The momentous decision of her whole existence was, she felt, now before her. No mere ill-temper prevented her from seeing her husband. She could not face him until she had made up her mind what she must do under the new circumstances that had arisen. For at the theatre she had seen the Ashburtons, and they had told her that Percy Mayburn had dropped dead at his club at dinner that very evening. Never before, Philippa thought, had the decease of a comparative stranger so altered another person's life. It had been one thing to play at love-making with her husband, to try and take him from a woman to whom he could not publicly belong; it was quite another to be the solitary hated barrier to the union of two lovers.

She dismissed her maid, put out her light, and sat, with her elbow on her knee, looking out into the quiet street.

Divorce, that was the solution. It was not a very agreeable one, but certainly it could be accomplished. Some lawyer—not Herbert, who would be triumphant—could arrange it for her. The question was, had she courage to carry it out, to give up all the pleasures and luxuries of her present life, to go back to working for her living (for, of course, she would never touch a penny of Dick's money), to be forgotten by the amusing, rollicking set of people who had surrounded

her since her marriage? Could she, and here her resolution faltered, could she make up her mind never to see or hear of Dick again? She supposed one did not even nod to one's divorced husband. She had almost admitted that such a lot was impossible when the reverse of the picture occurred to her: Dickie acknowledging that she was in his way, Dickie learning to hate her, Dickie and Mrs. Mayburn lamenting together that he had ever in his folly put such an obstacle between them.

In the morning he did not have to send for her. She came into his room almost before he had finished his breakfast, and stood at the foot of his bed, looking rather pale and worn. The morning paper was in his hand.

"Did you have a good night?" she inquired absently.

This was adding insult to injury.

"No, I did not," he returned angrily. "Thank you very much for contributing as much as you could to my discomfort. I particularly wanted to speak to you, but, of course, you knew I could not pursue you, and you naturally took advantage——"

"No, no, Dickie, I did not take advantage of you," she interrupted, smiling at the childishness of his tone, "but I could not see you until I had made up my mind what we had better do. It took me most of the night to be sure I was right, but now I am sure. Dickie, we must have a divorce."

There was a long pause. Then Dick said:

"Of course, you are quite right; any impartial outsider would agree to that. But don't you think you are just a little hard? Don't you think you might give me a chance, considering all things, the way I've been brought up,—it sounds rather silly, doesn't it? but it makes a difference. What happened yesterday afternoon——"

"I see you don't understand," said Philippa. "What happened yesterday afternoon has nothing, or not much, to do with what I am saying. Percy Mayburn died last evening."

"Good God!" cried Dickie. "Poor old Percy! Let me see the paper. Evidently fits, poor old fellow! Well, he enjoyed life while it lasted in his own way. When did you hear this?"

"Last night at the theatre."

"And what is it? You want a divorce because I don't seem likely to go off in the same convenient manner?"

"Oh, no. I want a divorce because I don't seem likely to go off in the same convenient manner."

"I don't think I quite understand." But she saw he did understand clearly.

"It would be clear to you, if you would attribute a little common-sense and self-respect to me. It is true, I was dense enough to im-

agine when I married you that you loved me, but when I found you did not, my position, though disagreeable, was bearable as long as I was not the only barrier between you and the woman you love. On Percy's death my position ceased to be bearable, and I do not propose to bear it."

"And what are we to do?"

"What do most people do? I shall go and live in Dakota, or you will, or whatever the place is where one gets divorces."

"And what are we to do then?"

"What you do is no concern of mine. I shall go back to teaching."

"It is customary under the circumstances to accept something towards your maintenance from your former husband."

"I should not think of doing so. I am fully capable of supporting myself."

"Ah, I see you have it all thought out. You have, of course, selected your lawyer,—your suave friend, Mr. Brainard, I have no doubt. No? In that case I speak for him for my side of the case. I am sure he would be glad to serve me in any capacity."

"Dick, I should like to talk seriously to you when this burst of spirits subsides."

"Serious! My dear Philippa, I'm more than that. I am practical to the last degree. The next point is, which of us is to get the divorce? Let me see,—the one who gets the divorce has to have a residence in Dakota. My dear wife, that shall be *you*. *You* shall bring the action."

"May I ask," said Philippa with some temper, "why you refuse to discuss this matter with me?"

"And why the devil should I discuss it with you?" Dick answered, and for the first time she saw that the elaborate lightness of his manner covered a very violent anger. "You tell me you want to leave me. Very well, what can I say but 'go'? You don't expect me to keep you against your will, do you? I can only add that I think you show admirably good taste in not being able to put up with me. I accused you a moment ago, I think, of being unjust, but, of course, you are most obviously right in thinking that I am not good enough for you. I'm not. There have been women dull enough to care about men who were not good enough for them, but as you seem in no danger of falling into that error, I can only congratulate you on having the courage of your convictions, and I don't doubt the sooner you are free from me the happier you will be."

Philippa felt herself confused by his attitude, by the concentrated bitterness of his tone. She had half hoped that he might oppose her, or, again, she had been half prepared for a common-sense acquiescence in her proposal, but for this tirade of consent which bore every mark of an obstacle, she was not prepared, nor did she know exactly how to treat it.

"I was not thinking entirely of my own happiness," she said hesitatingly.

"Oh, I'm sure you were not doing anything so selfish, and yet, let me say, that if you were considering mine, you were not showing your customary intelligence."

"Whether or not a marriage with Ida Mayburn would be happiness for you is not my business," said Philippa loftily. "That is something which you must decide."

"Must I, indeed," returned Dick with withering contempt. "Thank you so much! Then I decide at once that I'd rather be flayed alive than marry her."

"You can scarcely expect me to believe what you tell me."

"I should have expected you to know it without being told, and, as it happens, I always expect to be believed."

"Then you're unfortunate in the person you address," answered Philippa haughtily. "I was, it is true, so credulous as to believe you when you asked me to marry you and said you loved me."

"I never said anything of the kind," said Dick. "As it happened, I took particular pains not to."

This insult was too much. Philippa was already overstrained and over-excited, and, now, after a short but violent struggle, began to cry. Dick sat bolt upright in bed, and pounded the chair beside him.

"Come here," he said. She did not move.

"Philippa, come here, or I'll get up and dance on my bad leg."

Thus exhorted, she approached, wiping her eyes.

"I suppose," she said, with a sob and an infuriated glance, "that you are too intelligent to suppose I'm crying because you said you didn't love me. That would be too absurd."

"Well, why *are* you crying?"

"Because I'm tired and worried, and I don't know what to do."

"Sit down here and I'll tell you." She sat down reluctantly on the very edge of the bed, blowing her nose in a feeble, childish way.

"Now let us have some light on this matter. You have made up your mind that you can't live in the same house with me?"

She nodded.

"Because I am personally distasteful to you?"

She shook her head.

"Because you believe I wish to marry Ida Mayburn?"

She nodded.

"Well, I don't. Now, where are we?"

"Perhaps you don't, when I put it just like that, but if I should go off in a fit like Percy, what is the first thing you would do?"

"Go round the world, and keep on going. I should not marry—I mean, I should not ask Ida Mayburn to marry me. I should not ask

her if I were as free as air. I should not have done so if she had been free while I was a bachelor. I appreciate that there must have been a great many things in my conduct that you have not understood. I'm not particularly anxious that you should understand, and even if I were, I could not very well explain, but you must take my word that I'm telling you the truth."

Philippa sat silent, half frightened, half delighted, wholly thrilled by this unusually long speech. He went on:

"This being so, do you seriously want a divorce? If you do, you shall have it. It may be my only chance. There is nothing like starting fresh when you have made so signal a failure as I have——"

"Your last chance at what?" said Philippa, raising her head, for the words had a strangely brutal sound.

"At making you love me," Dick answered seriously. "I don't seem to have progressed much so far."

"I did not even know you were trying," Philippa answered, perhaps not quite truthfully. "There, there; don't go on so. I never said you had not succeeded. Indeed," she added thoughtfully, "I should not think of saying so to a person of your peculiar disposition, —even if it were true,—because I know it fuses you dreadfully to be loved; and so——"

How much longer she would have continued in this playful strain it is impossible to say, had not her husband, with unpardonable brusqueness, caught her to him, and, burying her head against his shoulder with a force that insured him against interruption, addressed her in the following terms:

"Oh, go to thunder, Phil! I'm tired of hearing about my peculiar disposition. It's no more peculiar now than any other lover's. If I were fool enough not to love you when I married you, I've made up for it since, God knows. If you do care about me, tell me so, for I have things to tell you through which nothing but the knowledge of your love will support me. Now, if I let you speak, will you say all that I want you to?"

And of this, in spite of lack of air, Philippa contrived to assure him.

"Yes, of course I love you—what woman with the slightest pretence to good sense, taste, and femininity could fail to love you? Aunt Polly knew how it would be, only I did not believe her. I was so sure then of my indifference and your love. No—not conceit, exactly, Dick, but I could not see any other reason for your marrying me. Why did you marry me?"

Dick locked her hand firmly in his, like a child about to enter a dark room, and then and there told her the true and particular story of his courtship of her. He told her of the dinner at his house, of the

conversation, of his contempt for intellectual women, and, finally, of her mother's dying request. It was a different narration from the one in Miss Graydon's front drawing-room.

Philippa listened in silence, which was not broken after he ceased. At length she sighed, saying:

"Ah, my poor mother! To think of anyone's being able to concern themselves for another at such a time." There was a long pause, and then she went on: "Isn't it strange, Dick, how the people we love always want us to have the things that are worst for us, and would make us most unhappy?"

"Is this a delicate allusion to me?" Dick inquired politely.

"Why, yes. Could anyone be more wretched than I was last night, when I thought everything was over and you didn't love me? Mamma ought to have seen that that was the almost inevitable consequence. Anyone could have told that there wasn't the least chance of *my* avoiding falling in love with *you*."

"Perhaps your mother was equally clear-sighted in regard to me."

"Don't be absurd, Dick. You know quite well it was the strangest thing in the world for a man like you to grow fond of a girl like me."

To this her husband made the only reply possible as he kissed her.

"Do you know what I want to do, Phil?" he said presently. "Even if you haven't had a fit like poor old Percy, I want to go round the world and take you with me. I know lots of places that we must see together."

It was a suggestion that appealed to Philippa on a good many grounds, and when the Doctor came an hour later, he found them with their heads bent together over the Atlas.

IX.

A WEEK later, Dick, who had made the most astonishing progress towards recovery, was allowed to get up, and from that moment confusion reigned in the house. New trunks appeared and old ones were repaired. The proper kind of clothing for cold countries was bought, as well as the most convenient sort for hot ones. All things that could add comfort to travel by land or water began to arrive at the house,—steamer-chairs and tea-baskets,—while through it all Dick dashed to and fro with time-tables and maps in his hand, and such suggestions on his tongue as:

"Phil, dear, don't you think you would like to see Burmah?" or, "On the whole, it does seem a pity to leave out St. Petersburg."

About eleven o'clock in the morning of the day before they sailed Philippa returned from making her last purchases. She and Dick had been driving about in the victoria together, and now the carriage

had taken him far up on the west side of town to interview a man who, he had heard, could give him information concerning the island of Java.

At the door Salters told her that Mrs. Mayburn was in the study.

"Mrs. Mayburn asked for Mr. Dyson, Madam," Salters added with his severest look, "and when I said Mr. Dyson was out, she said she would wait."

Philippa hesitated a moment. Her natural impulse was to let Mrs. Mayburn have her own way, and wait, the knowledge that Dick could not be in for a good two hours lending pleasure to the thought; but the next instant something midway between courtesy and the love of battle led her to the study.

Ida rose to meet her without the smallest pretence of being glad to see her. Her *crêpe* garments rustled with fashion and newness, but black had never been her most becoming color.

"Dick will be sorry to miss you," Philippa began politely, "but he's gone up to One-hundred-and-Fourth Street, and I have no idea when he'll be back."

The news seemed to crush Ida. She was silent for an appreciable time, as if considering. Then, taking a decision, she said firmly and with more than her old cordiality:

"After all, dear Philippa, it's you I want to see. It's you I have something to say to. Is it true you sail to-morrow?"

Philippa nodded.

"How long shall you be gone?"

Philippa raised her hands and eyebrows as she answered, with a smile she tried not to make too happy, that she hadn't the least idea.

Ida looked threateningly affectionate.

"There is something I must tell you before you go," she said. "Indeed, I am to blame for not having told you before, I fear." She smiled with sad sweetness. "I fear I have not behaved kindly." This seemed so possible that Philippa could think of nothing to reply, and Ida went on. "You are so brave, so loyal, that no one has seen—I'm sure I am the only person who knows how unhappy, how justly unhappy, you are."

Philippa felt her heart sink with the sudden knowledge of what was coming, but she answered, smiling:

"You attribute too much self-control to me. I am very far from being unhappy."

"Ah, my dear," said Mrs. Mayburn, "it isn't necessary to wear the mask with me. I know your husband *well*; I know how difficult he can be at times with even his dearest friends. And what you have borne I tremble to think. I know that, sensitive as you are, nothing would make you so happy as to be furnished with an excuse to leave

him." With this she felt she had said enough to rouse Philippa's curiosity in defiance of every other emotion, and she was therefore a good deal disappointed when her hostess answered calmly,—

"Why, no, believe me—I have no intention of leaving Dick at present."

"Ah," said the other, shaking her head wisely, "you can never persuade me of that. You take this way because you are so reserved, but I know that a woman of your pride and self-respect is not really willing to stay with a man who was driven into marrying her against his will."

Philippa, like many others of her type, was capable of getting extremely and suddenly angry; and now her first idea was to ring for Mrs. Mayburn's carriage, but, conquering herself, she said as sweetly as Ida herself,—

"Really, dear, you ought not to believe every wild tale you pick up."

Mrs. Mayburn sighed deeply. "I wish it were a wild tale," she said with pathos. "Unfortunately, I have the most positive knowledge of its truth."

"Oh, I think you'll find you are mistaken," Philippa replied with a pleasant airiness peculiarly annoying to her companion.

"I had supposed," she said, "that you could scarcely have failed to suspect that something of the kind was the case, or else, of course, dear, I should never have brought up such a dreadful subject, but as long as so much has been said—as long, indeed, as I came expressly to help you——"

"I thought it was Dick you came to see," Philippa put in gently. "I really must speak to Salters. He is getting so dull."

Ida did not allow herself to be put out by such a trifle. "It is true," she said, "that I did at first want to see Dick. I had hoped to persuade him to tell you this himself. The truth of the matter is that he married you under the constraint of a promise to your mother. Dick is so tender-hearted that he could deny her nothing, utter stranger as she was, when she was dying. Possibly he imagined that on so slight an acquaintance you would refuse him, but when you accepted him——"

"Now, isn't it strange," Philippa remarked to the air, "the stories intelligent people will believe?"

"Dear," said Mrs. Mayburn, "aren't you just a little obstinate? I know that what I tell you is true, because he told me himself." She had played her trump.

"Dear," replied Philippa, "I know, of course, that you think you are speaking the truth, but every word you say makes me more and more convinced that you are laboring under some strange delusion."

Even if the conditions of his marriage had been as you say, of course, the last thing in the world a man like Dick would do is to tell them to an outsider."

"I am not exactly an outsider," said Ida with some hesitation.

"As far as Dick and I are concerned you are."

"Suppose you ask your husband if I am right?"

"Oh, I should not think of mentioning this subject to Dick. He is so busy just now."

"Really, dear," said Mrs. Mayburn, for the first time betraying temper, "anyone who did not know what a noble creature you are would think you were determined to stay with Dick on account of his money."

"How fortunate it is, then, that my true reasons for staying with him are of no importance to anyone but himself and me, and to him, I am happy to say, they are entirely satisfactory."

"He is very much changed, then," said Ida spitefully, throwing off all attempt at sweetness.

"Perhaps that is the explanation," returned Philippa with meaning. "He is very much changed."

"Well, dear," said Mrs. Mayburn, rising, "of course, I'm glad to have been able to do my duty without causing any breach between you, and, of course, I think you are very wise to keep all these pretty things. My conscience is relieved, at all events."

"It must be a great relief," her hostess answered gravely.

Mrs. Mayburn walked towards the door, and there delivered her parting shot.

"I suppose you know, dear," she said, "that your friend, Herbert Brainard, is making a fool of himself over Lily Ashburton. Men are so fickle."

"Oh, I don't know," Philippa returned, touching the bell for Salters. "I never think a young man's attentions to a married woman are of much importance—at least as far as *he* is concerned."

Mrs. Mayburn opened the door. Salters stood ready in the hall, and she was gone. She had, Philippa knew, done her worst, thrown her last dart, and after she was gone, it inflicted its full share of suffering, all the more poignant because Philippa was resolved that Dick should never know of it. Once sure of his affection, she could afford to spare him small humiliations, and even to shield so poor a member of her sex as Ida.

Before long, however, the idea began to dawn on her that Dick was extremely late for luncheon, and this continued to gain force during the three-quarters of an hour that followed the regular luncheon-time.

At last she heard the victoria drive up. There was some scuffling

and giggling in the hall, and then Dick entered, surrounded, if the term may be used, by Serena and Elizabeth May, the faces of all three wreathed in smiles.

"Please, Ma'am," said Dick, "we've come to lunch! We met—not by appointment, believe me, by the purest accident—in the Park. I was driving by when I heard the voice of Elizabeth May hailing 'her gentleman.' Since then we've had six rides on the donkeys and three in the goat-carriage in honor of Serena's natal day, and now we have returned to include you in our final orgy."

"Where are their nurses?" said Philippa as clearly as two pair of very short arms round her neck would allow.

Dick looked blank.

"I forgot about their nurses," he said. "I left them in a flock of other nurses. I suppose they think the children have been kidnapped."

"Dickie," said Philippa very severely, "how can you be so thoughtless! Go and telephone their respective families at once that the children are lunching with us."

Elizabeth May skipped from the arm of Philippa's chair and, approaching Dick, stealthily squeezed his hand, murmuring:

"She'll be nice again presently. She used to talk like that to us sometimes."

"Ah," said Dick, "but a merciful fate intervened to save you—whereas she's going on talking like that to me for the rest of my natural life."

Elizabeth May's large, round eyes swam for an instant. Hers was a sympathetic nature, and she could not bear people to be scolded.

Above her head, however, Dick and Philippa exchanged a look that did not ask for sympathy.

CLOUDS

BY ROSE N. YAGER

WHEN the rain comes down,
Then I love to sit,
In an old and comfy gown,
Where the shadows dance and flit,
In the fireside bright,
In the falling shades of night,
And dream and dream of you,
When the rain comes down.

AN UNWRITTEN CHAPTER OF "LES MISÉRABLES"

By Victor Hugo's Brother-in-Law

(PAUL CHENAY)

AT the beginning of the year 1859 I was at Guernsey, visiting Victor Hugo, who was then deeply engrossed in giving the finishing touches to his great novel, "Les Misérables," the first two volumes of which were already in the printer's hands. During one of the daily walks we were in the habit of taking together, I noticed that he was worried about something, so much so, indeed, that I ventured to inquire the reason.

"You appear to me to be anxious, my dear brother-in-law," I said to him. "What is the matter?"

"Yes," he answered, "I am troubled. The fact is, I cannot get a document that I need; and even if I could get it, it must be exact and true in all its details. It should be prepared by one who has actually seen what he describes. In a word, I want a perfectly reliable account of the ceremony known in the Catholic Church as Perpetual Adoration. Of course, the best persons to apply to for this information would be the nuns themselves who perform this pious act. But, naturally, they are not free to speak. I wish very much to give my readers a carefully written description and history of this solemn rite. But I greatly fear I will have to abandon the idea and cast aside this chapter, which is partly written."

"But," I answered, "when the holy sacrament is exposed in the churches on certain grand ceremonial occasions, you see kneeling before it devotees praying with great fervor and profound conviction. Certainly this must be much like the Perpetual Adoration. Will not the recollection of these scenes furnish the inspiration you need?"

"Nothing that one sees in the day-time in our most sumptuous cathedrals," he replied, "can give an adequate idea of what I want to say in this part of my book. Consequently, because I do not know and have not seen, I am about resolved, as I have just said, to omit all mention of this theme, to which, however, I cling very strongly. It must be exact or be suppressed."

"Is there no way by which we can prevent the sacrifice of this

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chapter?" I earnestly inquired, having a premonition that it meant the loss to literature of a notable page.

"I fear not," he answered rather sadly, "unless——"

"Unless what?" I hastily interrupted. "Can I help in any way in this matter? If so, you have only to command."

Victor Hugo shook my hand warmly and continued:

"There are two convents in Paris where is practised Perpetual Adoration according to the ceremonial and rigorous rites handed down by tradition. One is at the Picpus Convent, where is laid the scene of that portion of my story where I wish to introduce the material about which we are talking; the other is the convent in the Rue des Postes, where, I think, I have the means of, so to speak, forcing an entrance, if the proper tact and cleverness are shown. Here is how we can accomplish our object. But let me first say that what I am now going to confide to you is known to me alone outside of the narrow family circle personally concerned.

"I am in possession of a family secret to the effect that a nun who died in that convent some thirty years ago was buried, without her relatives being informed of her death, in the convent chapel, in direct violation of the law. Her parents were incensed and, much to the concern of the order, threatened a lawsuit.

"Now, I know the name, age, etc., of the deceased, and, though the members of the family who are still living no longer care much about the matter, you will see that if an intelligent use is made of it, we may possibly accomplish our purpose, to witness at night the ceremony of Perpetual Adoration. The Lady Superior should be told what we want, and, if necessary, must be given an inkling of what we could do if our wish is not gratified."

I forthwith agreed to undertake the rather difficult and unquestionably very delicate mission. The same day I took the boat for Cherbourg, was at Paris the next morning, and presented myself a few hours later at the door of the convent in the Rue des Postes. There I encountered the first obstacle, the female porter or confidential guardian of the threshold of the convent, who was not a little astonished at my bold request to be presented to the Lady Superior. But a box of delicious candies, which I had provided for this very contingency, worked like a charm, and she soon brought me back the message that if I called the next day at a certain hour, I would be admitted to the august presence of the head of the nunnery.

It is unnecessary for me to say that I was very exact at the appointment, when I was duly ushered into the convent parlor. As soon as the door was shut behind me, a large curtain at the end of the room was drawn back, revealing a triple grating whose interstices were so fine that it was impossible to see through, though the voice of the Lady

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Superior, who was behind this shield, clearly traversed it and reached my ear distinctly.

In a grave but sweet-toned voice the Lady Superior asked the object of my visit. Thereupon I communicated Victor Hugo's desire, at the same time letting the good nun see, discreetly but plainly, that we were aware of the illegal act committed by her community, and ended by assuring her that my wish to witness the ceremony was not prompted by mere idle and vulgar curiosity.

The Lady Superior silently listened to my story, and when I had finished, quietly informed me that before giving me her answer she would have to consult the chapter, as the demand was not of an ordinary nature. So I was asked to return the next day. Thereupon the curtain was drawn in front of the gratings, the door of the parlor opened, and I found the porter there ready to escort me back to the street.

On the next morning I was delighted to be informed that my request had been granted, and that I could witness the ceremony during the night of Tuesday-Wednesday, which, fortunately, happened to be Mardi-Gras, when the rites are naturally more elaborate than on ordinary occasions.

When I reached the hidden nook allotted to me in the gallery from which I was to follow the scene below, I immediately perceived two adorers kneeling before the blessed sacrament, which was surrounded by many lighted candles, while the rest of the chapel was plunged in complete darkness. These twin, silent figures, bowing motionless before the illuminated altar, which stood out from the surrounding gloom like a celestial beacon-light, produced a very awe-inspiring effect that moved my deepest soul.

At the end of two hours I distinguished, coming slowly out of the darkness at the back of the church, two processions of white, phantasm-like objects, who advanced in separate columns on either side of the altar, the leader of each column, whose full length could be discerned, alone appearing like an earthly being. The other figures, half hidden behind the first, looked more like ghosts than nuns. They had come to relieve their praying sisters and take their places.

Approaching the adorers, the first nun of each column gently lifted the upper part of the long shroud of the kneeling nun, who had been in this position for several hours, leaving the lower part undisturbed, when the nun hidden thereunder came out on one side, bowing low to the floor, while the nun who was to take her place glided under the shroud on the other side, and immediately assumed the customary kneeling posture. This change was accomplished simultaneously by the four nuns, and the movement was executed deliberately, silently, and with precision, without a fold of the shroud, under which it went

on, being ruffled and without apparently disturbing the solemn meditations of the actors in this impressive scene. The rapidity with which it was executed was also notable, for it was accomplished in a shorter time than it takes me to describe it.

I was, of course, profoundly impressed by all I had seen, and hastened back to Guernsey next day to make my report to Victor Hugo. It was with my notes on my impressions and feelings, supplemented by certain historic facts which I had gathered, that the art and genius of a great writer has constructed that Picpus episode which is not the least curious portion of that masterpiece of romance-writing, "Les Misérables."



MOONLIGHT IN THE DESERT

BY CLINTON SCOLLARD

WE saw the moon ascend the skies
 As though to music chorded deep,—
 Sweet, super-earthly harmonies
 Swept through the great, calm halls of Sleep.

Then in ethereal equipoise
 It seemed to hang, a bubble blown
 Of tenuous gold, as pure as joy's
 First ecstasy in Eden known.

And lo, a miracle! for all
 That arid waste, compact of gloom,
 And unto desolation thrall,
 Was as a garden girl with bloom.

Topaz and veined amethyst
 The paths that wended up and down;
 And in a veil of violet mist
 The distances appeared to drown.

Despite we knew that dawn would show
 But hideous sand-blight to our eyes,
 So strong the spell it was as though
 We stood in Allah's paradise.

THE SCYTHE IN THE OAK-TREE

By *Beulah Marie Dix*

Author of "The Making of Christopher Ferringham," etc.



IN a corner of the meadows that lie to the north of the village of Glanby stands a great oak-tree, and in the crotch of this tree, within the memory of old men, hung a scythe. It was a scythe of an ancient and clumsy pattern, the like of which had not been seen for years in the Connecticut Valley. Its rusted blade, all save one fragment near the snath, was overgrown with the bark of the tree, and the snath itself was worn gray with wind and weather. Even fifty years ago men opined that it had hung there "upwards of a hundred years."

It is about this scythe in the oak-tree that the story is to tell—about the scythe and the masterful temper of Nicholas Sutcliffe.

Early in the second quarter of the eighteenth century Nicholas Sutcliffe lived in Glanby. His house, that had been his father's, stood midway of the one street of the little town. The street was without shade, and the tilled fields rolled away from it, with never a break of water or of bush, eastward to the mountains and westward to the great river. But the monotonous fields were rich and fertile. The men of Glanby were prosperous, and of them all the most prosperous was Nicholas Sutcliffe.

Sutcliffe was thirty years old in the year when Ned English hung up his scythe in the oak-tree in the north meadows. He was a tall young man, square-jawed and broad-shouldered, with an aggressive trick of carrying his head high. Indeed, Sutcliffe was well satisfied with himself. He came of as good blood as was to be found in the Valley, held as good a farm as any in miles around, and managed it as well. Management was, in fact, Sutcliffe's strong point. His meek, pale-eyed wife and his old mother said proudly that Nicholas had a masterful temper. His father had died when Nicholas was a mere child, but it was Nicholas who had managed the farm and managed his mother and the younger children, whether they liked it or not, just as now, grown to manhood, he managed his family and half the affairs of his fellow-townsmen. He was a just man, but he must

be himself the judge of what made justice, and a kindly man, but he must do his kindnesses in the way that suited him best. Sometimes those about him, household or neighbors, might wish things to be done in slightly different fashion, but in the end Nicholas Sutcliffe's masterful temper always carried the day.

Now in that winter when Sutcliffe was thirty he suffered a serious mischance in the loss of his negro slave. The black man was injured by a falling tree, so severely that, after lingering a week or two, he died. Against the summer labors Sutcliffe looked about him for another servant. He had had enough of negroes; he wanted now a white redemptioner, and he made his want known to a correspondent in Boston. So it was that in the last days of May Ned English came to Glanby.

Sutcliffe looked him over with disapproval. Ned was a slenderly built young fellow of scant one-and-twenty, with smooth hands that betrayed his utter inexperience of labor, and a winningness of manner that marked him off from the class to which he sought to join himself. By the father's side Ned was a gentleman, and, moreover, for the sake of his handsome face he had received from that father the same education that he would have received had he been a son in name as well as in fact. The death of the father had changed everything. Ned had, of course, no standing in law or in equity. The property was left entirely in the hands of his father's widow, who virtuously hated him. Ned had found himself without name or fortune, and speedily without friends.

Yet the fibre of some ancestor more remote than his frail parents was in the young man. The life of an adventurer in the town where he had borne himself as a gentleman had not appealed to him. He had recalled vague stories of the colonies, where land was easily acquired and fortunes soon built up, and in the end he had changed his name and put himself into the hands of a crimp, with the understanding that his three years of service should be set against the payment of his passage into New England. By such means he drifted into Massachusetts, drifted into Glanby on the Connecticut, where Nicholas Sutcliffe, who had expected for his hire a broad-shouldered yokel, looked with disapproval on the slender young gentleman.

Still, for all Sutcliffe's forebodings, the two men got along well at first. Ned labored bravely to shake off the habits in which he had been reared and to remember that he was this other man's servant. To the best of his ability he did what he was bidden to do, and that was seldom beyond his strength or comprehension. Sutcliffe never had had the reputation of being a hard master. He wanted his bidding to be done, and done instantly,—that was part of his masterful temper,—but aside from that he treated Ned kindly enough.

Thus matters ran smoothly for two weeks, for three weeks, and then came the affair of the scythe. It was such a mere trifle at the start! Ned was mowing in the north meadows, where Sutcliffe had left him earlier in the afternoon. When the last swath was cut he hung his clumsy scythe in an oak-tree at the corner of the field and set to stacking the hay for the night. This work left him, naturally, at the opposite corner of the field, and without a second thought for his scythe he walked home and left it hanging in the oak-tree.

It was a sweltering day in June. The sun was near to setting, but the air was heavy with heat, and the red dust of the roadway pricked the skin. Ned was cruelly tired. He was not used to manual labor, nor was he yet broken to the climate of this new country. He was too stiff-necked, however, to ask Sutcliffe, a stronger man than he, to favor him at first with lighter tasks, though he had a feeling that Sutcliffe would probably have so far indulged him. But he took pride in fighting through these first months without once confessing his weakness. He trusted that even now he would feel himself again when he had had a swim in the river and eaten his supper. He looked forward to that swim with special eagerness and, as soon as he had put his pitchfork in the barn, headed down through the hot home-field to the river-bank.

There, as it chanced, Sutcliffe met him. Sutcliffe too had felt the strain of the hot day. He was tired, irritated. His crops were parching for want of rain, and he had just found that the blight was in his wheat. He halted alongside of Ned.

"Home early, aren't you?" he asked. "Did you remember to bring home your tools?" His sense of order that sprang from his instinct for management had been disturbed more than once already by Ned's carelessness with the farm implements.

Ned clapped his hand to his head. "Egad! I left my scythe in the meadow," he exclaimed.

"Fetch it at once, then," bade Sutcliffe.

Ned hesitated. He was thoroughly tired, and it was a hot, dusty mile to the meadows and another mile back. "I'll fetch it after supper," he proffered.

Whether before or after supper made little difference, but Ned's proffer ran counter to Sutcliffe's masterful temper. He had said "Go!" and, right or wrong, Ned must go. People hitherto had done Nicholas Sutcliffe's bidding. He repeated his command, this time with all the insolence of a master.

It was a tone Ned had never heard before. All the temper of the former London gentleman was up. "I won't go a step till I've eaten," he vowed.

"You'll not eat till you do my bidding," retorted Sutcliffe, and

the end of the brisk wrangle that followed was that Ned cried, in a towering passion, "I'll never fetch your damned scythe, then!"

"There's another word to that," answered Sutcliffe, icy cold, and made a step towards him.

Ned realized his position. He had been impudent, insubordinate. His master had the right to chastise him, and Sutcliffe, a strapping, tall fellow, was well able to enforce that right. Smallswords, not fists, were Ned's chosen weapons; he had no chance at all against Sutcliffe, but he had not the slightest intention of letting himself be pummelled. He took to his heels the few paces to the river-bank, with Sutcliffe close behind him. Down scrambled Ned, tearing off his coat as he went, and by the time Sutcliffe reached the margin of oozy beach below his unruly servant was clinging to a log well off shore.

Sutcliffe wasted few words. "I will give you such a thrashing for this as never man had!" he promised, and walked away to borrow a neighbor's boat.

Ned did not wait for him to return. In the last ten minutes, he knew well, he had ruined himself. His only hope now was to get away from Glanby and from Nicholas Sutcliffe. Happily, as it seemed to him then, he was a strong swimmer. Before the men and the boat came down the river he had crossed to the western shore, and in the twilight that was shutting down his pursuers lost track of him.

For three days and three nights Ned wandered up and down through the woods. His condition was indeed pitiable. He had but the vaguest notion of the lay of the land, and he had all a new-comer's dread of Indians and savage beasts. He dared not sleep lest some foe creep upon him. He knew neither roots nor berries that he could eat. The nights were chill in the Valley, and one day it rained in torrents. He was wet and half clad and foot-sore and hungry. In the end the hunger mastered him. He knew that he should avoid all houses, but on the fourth evening, when he spied from the wood the distant lights of a lone farmhouse, he dragged himself towards them. A tattered, white-faced spectre of a man, he staggered over the threshold and begged for food.

They gave it to him generously. "You're the chap that ran away from Sutcliffe's, aren't you?" asked the farmer.

Denial was useless. Sutcliffe, maddeningly confident of the runaway's recapture, had done nothing more than send his description up and down the river, but he had done enough. A message went to Sutcliffe that very evening. Ned humbled himself so far as to beg the farmer who sheltered him, a good-natured seeming fellow, to let him go, to give him one more chance, but he only wasted his words. The man seemed a little sorry for him, but Sutcliffe's cause was the cause of every master in the Valley.

Next morning Sutcliffe arrived on horseback. An older man might have had wisdom at that moment, might have felt some compassion for Ned English, but Sutcliffe was in the flood-tide of stalwart youth, an age that knows no pity.

"No," he refused the proffer of a horse for Ned, "the fellow walked out of Glanby, and now he shall walk back thither."

So Ned walked at Sutcliffe's saddle-bow all the weary, hot miles back to Glanby village. He was lame, staggering, but he asked no mercy, and Sutcliffe offered none. A just man, provided he himself were judge of what made justice, he held that he was giving Ned a richly deserved lesson. Ned would think twice before he ran away again, yes, and he would do now, perhaps, what he was bidden to do.

Before his house on Glanby street Sutcliffe halted his horse, and halted Ned too with a hand on his collar.

"We'll go on to the meadows," he said quietly. "And you'll bring home that scythe before you eat or rest."

Ned looked up at him. It was late afternoon, when all the men of Glanby had returned from the fields. Along the street they had been vociferous in their interest in Ned. They all knew the story of his flight and what had led up to it. To fetch that scythe now was to walk down the village street, conquered, humbled, under all those mocking eyes. Ned drew a long breath.

"I'll do whatever else you bid," he said huskily, "but I'll never fetch that scythe."

Sutcliffe's face, with its square jaw, set like a mask of granite. After a moment he spoke. "I have the right to whip you for a runaway," he said.

Sutcliffe whipped Ned in the barn. Months afterwards, when the tragedy was played out, he sickened to recall the positive joy with which he had laid blow after blow on that dumb, writhing form. At the moment Sutcliffe was well-nigh mad. He, with the masterful temper, and pitted against him this white-faced young fellow whom he could have broken across his knee, and yet—and yet—always that dumb white opposition that he could not break down!

Once and again Sutcliffe held his hand. "Will you fetch that scythe?" he almost whispered.

Ned made no answer. His lip, that was clinched between his teeth, was running blood.

In the end Sutcliffe had to give over, for all he had not wrung submission from Ned. But the young man hung limp and half-conscious in his hold, and he dared not strike another blow.

A just man and kindly, after his own fashion, Sutcliffe carried the obstinate fellow to his chamber over the kitchen, put him to bed, and dressed his lacerated back. The mad fit had now passed. Indeed,

as Sutcliffe looked down at Ned, prone on the pallet before him, he felt a sort of contemptuous pity. It was unfortunate that he had had to do this thing, but Ned must learn not to set his will against his master's. He would do as he was told now, no doubt, and after this, Sutcliffe promised himself, half shamefacedly, he would be easier with the lad and not provoke another struggle.

But while Sutcliffe went to his bed in this Christian frame of mind, Ned English was mastered by every unholy passion. An unfortunate fact that every devil begets another devil! The devil had flared up in Sutcliffe when he plied the whip, there in the barn, and as fierce a devil now raged in Ned English. He was quivering and sweating with the pain of his torn back, but the physical smart was as nothing beside the mental agony that racked him. He had been whipped,—he, a gentleman,—whipped by this rough-handed yeoman! All the little village that was now his world would whisper it, tell it about, jeer at him when he passed. Life was over for him. There was nothing to live for—nothing but revenge.

In the dark of midnight Ned crawled from his bed and, stifling the groans that would rise to his lips, dragged his torn and bloodied garments over the bandages that Sutcliffe, in good Samaritan fashion, had placed on his back. Then, one stealthy movement after another, he crept down the stairs to the kitchen. He fainted there, but after a time the draught from an open window, blowing fresh in his face, revived him. He groped in the ashes of the hearth till he found a live brand, and, softly raising the latch, crept out into the yard. His progress across the yard to the farther barn, where the hay was stored, was a veritable martyrdom. The pain in his back turned him fairly sick. Again and again he lay at full length, gasping, sobbing with the anguish of it, and every time his resolution grew. Sutcliffe should pay—oh, Sutcliffe should pay for it!

Once in the barn, he fostered the spark of the brand lovingly, blowing upon it, tempting it with choice, dry bits of hay. Soon he had a merry little blaze, crackling over the hay on the floor, licking upward to the full mows. Then he staggered to the door, and there on the threshold fainted.

It were far better for him had he perished there, unconscious, in the burning barn, but such good fortune was not granted him. A wakeful neighbor over the way spied the blaze reddening, ran out, startling the quiet night with his clamor of "Fire!" and dragged Ned's unconscious body to a place of safety. For some hours no further attention was paid him, while all Glanby labored to master the flames. The wind fought against them. Sutcliffe's house and his cattle were saved, but at daylight his two barns were in ruins.

Quite naturally, Ned found himself outside the pale of sympathy.

The Valley that disapproved of runaway servants had even less tolerance for incendiaries. As soon as his back was sufficiently healed, Ned went in the Sheriff's custody to the county town. There was no one to give bail for him. He lay for two months in a crowded prison, and then was brought into court to defend himself against as clear a charge as ever was laid against any man. Only one end to the trial was possible. Ned was sentenced to receive twenty lashes at the public whipping-post and, after his three years of service were out, to serve Nicholas Sutcliffe for ten years more.

It was a day in late September when for the second time Sutcliffe brought Ned back to Glanby. Ned rode on horseback this time. There was a cowed droop to his shoulders and he kept his eyes on the pommel of his saddle. The disgrace of the public whipping, the hopelessness of the years of servitude before him, had well-nigh crushed the spirit out of him. He was willing to give up the fight. If Sutcliffe would treat him with semi-humanity, he was ready to do what was asked of him—all but one thing. And it was that one thing that Sutcliffe wanted. He was man enough to be willing to pardon the unhappy lad, but first he must receive from him complete submission.

When they dismounted at the house-door, Sutcliffe renewed the attack, not doubting now of victory: "Well, Ned, I guess first thing you'd better go up to the meadow and fetch that scythe and have it over with."

For a moment Ned leaned against the door-post without speaking. Perhaps in the long misery of prison his brain had become warped in this one matter, but, in any case, it was now almost impossible for him to do this thing that Sutcliffe bade. In a dim way he felt that to fetch that scythe would be to forego the last shred of self-respect and manliness that was left him. If his will, for the mastery of which they had struggled, were yielded up now to Sutcliffe's, he would be for the rest of his years no more than Sutcliffe's cringing slave. His lips set in a gray line.

"I won't bring it," he said again.

For a moment the two stubborn men, with their mutual wrongs upon them, fronted each other. Neither saw a jot of yielding in the other's eyes.

"Get to your room," Sutcliffe bade at last. But he did not give up the struggle. No more than Ned could he give it up now. He must have not submission alone, but the contested symbol of submission, the symbol visible to his fellow-townsmen who had watched the contest. With him also it had become almost a mania to get his own will in this matter.

For a week he kept Ned a scantily fed prisoner in the kitchen chamber. He threatened, he commanded, and to it all Ned, with his

white face and bowed shoulders, repeated obstinately, "I won't fetch the scythe. Anything else—but I'll never fetch that scythe."

The very weakness and helplessness of the lad maddened Sutcliffe. He had hurt Ned, could hurt him now, make him wince merely by laying a stout grip on his arm, and yet—and yet the fellow would not do his bidding.

"Rule or ruin" was the word with Sutcliffe now. One morning he called Ned down into the kitchen and told him what his punishment was to be. He had decided to hire him out for the winter months to one John Glover, who was going up the river on a trapping expedition. Sutcliffe made the announcement calmly, and Ned heard him without a quiver, but both knew that virtually Ned was sent away to be broken by deliberate abuse into doing his master's bidding. In the towns the law threw some protection over a servant, to such extent that Sutcliffe himself had been questioned as to the state of Ned's back and cautioned not to whip him again. But in the wilds of New Hampshire there was no law to stand between master and servant, and John Glover, black sheep of a respectable family, was a hard-handed and bitter-tempered scoundrel.

"When you are ready to do as you are bidden, I shall have work for you on the farm," Sutcliffe told Ned meaningly on the last morning; but without a word Ned went away at Glover's side.

The months ran round. The meadows were brown and sear, and then white with snow, and black with thaw. Still the scythe hung rusting in the oak-tree, and men, admiringly or not, as the case might be, told the story of Nicholas Sutcliffe's masterful temper that had met a temper masterful as itself.

Then at last, of a pale evening in the springtime, Trapper Glover strode into Sutcliffe's dooryard, and at his side limped a slender young fellow who carried one arm in a sling.

"Here he is!" Glover told Sutcliffe, and haled Ned English by the collar into the barn where his master stood. "I reckon he'll do as he's told henceforth. 'Cod! You're welcome to him, Nicholas! As ugly a young devil as ever I had the handling of. Tried to shoot me up yonder at Cowass. Never tried it a second time, though."

So he ran over the list of Ned's delinquencies. Ned made no counter-charges, but stood stone quiet with eyes on the floor while the men discussed him. He did not look up even at the sound of Sutcliffe's voice.

"Well, Ned," Sutcliffe asked, just as before, "are you ready to fetch that scythe?"

"Yes," said Ned English heavily, "anything you please. Only leave me in peace for to-night."

The glow of victory descended on Sutcliffe. "A pity you had to

be stubborn," he said, but his voice was kind. Indeed, he would rather be at peace with Ned than not, and he would be a good master to him after this. A master, of course, but a good one; he was best judge of what was best.

But Ned gave no heed to whatever tardy kindness was in Sutcliffe's bearing. He did not want to speak nor to eat, only to crawl away to his old chamber over the kitchen. There he lay down on his pallet, and he never got up from it.

Sutcliffe tended him patiently through those last days. He found the lad's back was a mass of festering cuts and his body was marked with the scars of old burns, the witnesses of the tortures of that winter. Ned had lived through it all stubbornly, but now the strength was not in him to shake off a simple fever. The process of mastering him seemed to have crushed out of him the vital something in which lay all his power of recovery. Sutcliffe had broken the fellow's spirit effectually, and by the same process had broken his heart.

Towards the end the white stillness with which Ned endured everything, even Sutcliffe's presence, gave way to wild delirium. All the last night, while Sutcliffe sat by him, he tossed and moaned.

"I'll not fetch it," he kept whispering. "I'll not fetch your damned scythe, Sutcliffe! I'll never fetch it,—never, never! I'll never fetch your scythe!"

Then he died.

The scythe still hung in the oak-tree, for Sutcliffe would not bring it home. He had a morbid dread of touching the thing. If he walked down the street of Glanby with it, the neighbors surely would say: "There goes the man who killed his servant. He was in the wrong in the matter and he knows it, else he would not himself bring home the scythe."

But the scythe worried Sutcliffe. He could see it hanging in the oak-tree when he was mowing, and before the year was out he was glad to sell his strip of meadow land. Shortly after—that was when John Glover's trial and acquittal had ceased to be a matter for gossip—he sold his house and moved away across the river. Sutcliffe lived to be an old man, but no one ever heard again of his masterful temper. Rather, there was a painful hesitancy about him that grew upon him as he aged. And he aged rapidly in the years that followed Ned English's death.

No stone ever marked Ned's resting-place in the little upland graveyard. The scythe was at first his monument. Men passing that way told of "Sutcliffe's Ned," and added, perhaps with a chuckle, "Ye see, he didn't fetch it, after all." The story died out at last, but the scythe hung there in the oak-tree, in the corner of the meadows north of Glanby, even in the memory of old men, when Nicholas Sutcliffe, of the masterful temper, and Ned English had long been at peace.

A WEST AFRICAN TRADING STATION IN THE NIGER DELTA

By J. W. Davies



IT was early morning, and white folds of vapor hovered over the African river as our odoriferous oil launch—which had churned her way through the clammy fever mist all night—came panting into sight of a cluster of whitewashed factories in the Niger delta. There were palms behind them and tall cottonwoods beyond, so that with the lake-like stretch of shimmering water intervening, the settlement portrayed an attractive picture at a distance. One could not see the foulness beneath the mangroves, and though this may have been partly due to the speed of the launch, the air was pleasantly cool as yet.

A few canoes, with sleeping negroes littered about them in a picturesque mixture of barbaric color and complete nudity, lay moored alongside the hard-trodden bank; and the sandy compound—every cubic yard of which had been carried there in native craft from the smoking bar—was almost covered by long, whitewashed sheds that appeared to be tottering into premature decrepitude. Behind them stood a rickety wooden building with red-painted iron roof and wide veranda, raised high on piles to escape the worst of the miasma, and on one side a morass of fathomless mire, covered with crawling mangroves, stretched back from a muddy creek which smelt like a very foul sewer. Such is one's usual first impression of a West African riverside factory. When we reached the veranda by means of a stairway—which the ants and other insects had eaten partly through—we found its occupants making ready for the day's work. They were three in number, and a glance at them showed the effect of the climate, for all were hollow and pallid in face, and one who had merely slipped on a thin blue jacket over his pyjamas leaned ruefully upon the balustrade sucking a clinical thermometer while the rest gazed passively on. A trim, sable steward, attired in snowy white cotton garb with a crimson fez, brought in a few biscuits and coffee, and the inevitable whiskey bottle, which was also on the tray, contained but little of that welcome beverage when it was carried away.

Though a few thrive in the West African climate, there is something peculiarly enervating there to most men, even when they are untouched by fever. It may be the all-pervading steaming, or perhaps mere exposure to the rays of the tropical sun, which is weakening of itself, but whatever the cause may be, one generally awakens there with a languid feeling which makes the least exertion seem a difficulty. It is therefore not surprising that those who have hard and trying work to do should borrow temporary energy from alcohol. By the time we descended into the compound the trade canoes were coming down stream with a long row of paddles flashing on either side and the muddy river frothing at the bows. Westward along the Guinea coast Liberian Krooboy and Gold Coast Fanti display considerable skill in marine architecture, but of this the Niger man has none, and his craft are huge and shapeless things roughly hollowed out of a mighty cottonwood log. Those who plied the paddles were mostly naked slaves: the sable trader—gorgeously arrayed in cast-off European finery—reclined among his several wives beside a smoky fire under an awning at the stern. The delta is an unsettled region, and as wives are valuable assets, it was probably judicious to bring them with him, while for the protection of his merchandise a few fighting men with long-barrelled flintlocks crouched amidships. In spite of many a zealous officer's vigilance, canoes are periodically plundered and the crews shot down—hence many of our small troubles in that region owe their origin to commercial strife.

There was a wild race for landing between the foremost. Naked black bodies swayed forward and kept time to the thudding blades amid whistles and hisses and the breathless refrain of a paddling song, while standing aloft in the stern stood the owner alternately shouting encouragement to his paddlers and abuse at his rivals. Three of these craft crashed together abreast of us, and the paddles smote naked flesh instead of water, while baskets of jetty kernels hurtled in the air, and sable boarders tore at one another's hair. The negro is always a creature of impulse, and combines a reckless irresponsibility with a natural exuberance. The factory agent hastened to restore order with a wooden shovel, because he had paid for part of those kernels in advance, and when he had quelled the tumult the discharge of the cargo began.

Some rubber comes down these rivers, a few skins, and tusks of ivory, but the staple export of the delta is the produce of the oil-palm. Huge clusters of little red and yellow nuts grow beneath its tufted fronds, and from each of these a layer of scented grease is scraped by the bushman, who boils it to extract the fibre and thus produces the palm oil of commerce, worth on an average twenty pounds sterling (one hundred dollars) a ton. There then remains an inner shell, which is

cracked and the enclosed black kernels are shipped to Europe in thousands of tons and pressed for inferior oil.

We adjourned to the weighing-shed to watch the trader's slaves or retainers carry in the kernels. These men were all splendid, muscular fellows, almost entirely naked, except for designs in blue tattoo which stood out in high relief upon their oily skin, while the knitted hair of many told that they sprang from the Jakkery race. The youngest white clerk stood beside the big tub "cooler" hung on trunnions, which formed a measure for so many bushels, and it was apparently with much difficulty that he prevented the followers of different head men from emptying their baskets simultaneously into the tub, which would have complicated the transaction. This young man was to all appearances barely twenty years of age. He was really very much emaciated, his cheeks were sunken, and the flesh wasted from his bones: it seemed exceedingly doubtful whether he would outlive his three years' contract with his employers at home.

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It was some time later when I entered the general store or shop, where I found the negro agent, a haggard but shrewd man of forty years, in charge. Each man who had brought down palm oil or kernels received a stamped brass token as voucher for the quantity, and these were tendered as coin upon the counter. Silver currency has been introduced in places, but as yet the native dealer does not take kindly to it. Machetes, old silk hats, gaudy umbrellas, tin-framed mirrors, and many rubbishy sundries were taken in exchange; but these all had a standard value in the Bush, and each dusky merchant sought to acquire more than he was entitled to. Some stole one another's tallies and fought for coveted goods; the man who received a few shillings' worth desired to inspect everything in the store, and it needed keen vigilance to see that he did not possess himself of many small sundries during the process on the sly. The temperature resembled that of an oven, the iron roof was audibly cracking, and the clamor and odor grew almost unbearable. Yet when trade is brisk—and it is carried on everywhere in much the same fashion—some unfortunate white men must work long hours at a stretch in such places, otherwise the slightest want of watchfulness means a difference in the dividends. At the same time, it has its amusing side, for the negro is usually good-humored, and his witty ingenuity when charged with misappropriation turns the offence into a burlesque.

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A little of this retail commerce was sufficient for any spectator who had seen it all before, but when I visited the long, superheated salt and gin sheds I found but little improvement in the wholesale method, for

the bargaining was keener than ever, particularly as to the exact equivalent palm-kernels bore to salt and gin. In addition to odd sundries there are three great imports into Nigeria: bags of Cheshire salt, which travels far inland into the waste of the Sudan, rolls of Manchester cotton-cloth, and green cases of Hamburg gin—the latter costing about two pence halfpenny per quart wholesale, and though few white men care to drink it, there is a difference of opinion as to whether it is injurious or mildly beneficial in a damp climate.

Speaking generally of the delta,—and much of the Guinea coast,—the pure negro has been changed but little by contact with the European for four centuries, notwithstanding the persistent labors of missionaries. There are, it is true, highly educated black merchants, doctors, and lawyers—perhaps too many of the latter—in such places as Free Town, Accra, and Lagos, but to a great extent the seaboard African continues to be a barbarian of curiously unstable character—with the exception of the Kroo boy; he can hardly be induced to undertake any regular labor, and as he is given to rash bravery and childish cowardice, he cannot very well be fashioned into a decent soldier. Even among professing Christians there often remains the underlying fear of the Ju-Ju, in whose honor human blood is still poured out freely in the Niger delta. Inland, however, the tribesmen have considerably improved mentally and morally by admixture with the descendants of Moor and Arab and conversion from Ju-Ju worship to the faith of Islam. As most people know, there were at one time powerful and semicivilized sultanates on the southern fringe of the Sudan, and it is from the semisoldier races on their borders that the black troops are recruited. These people have their failings, but they are brave with the recklessness of the fatalist, skilled in industries, and capable of organization; they are certainly neither heathen nor African savages. Othman of Sokoto was a statesman and lawmaker as well as conqueror, and his descendants have not wholly degenerated. Moham-medanism is spreading rapidly in the English colonies, and, on the whole, its influence is salutary.

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Having left the factory, we proceeded through the Bush, between great colonnades of mighty cottonwood trunks, in search of the Consulate, whence a comrade, who had business there, had preceded us. On reaching this—the seat of government in that district—we discovered evidences of civilization—neatness, method, law, and order. The Consulate was pile-built and iron-roofed, having a broad veranda around it and white palings running along the river on to the trim pineapple borders about the parade-ground. Above all floated the Union Jack. The barracks—a low, whitewashed structure—stood at the farther end of the broad square of trampled sand; a few black men in yellow

uniform and crimson fez lounged in its shade, and two others with rifles that glinted in the sunglare paced up and down beneath the consular veranda with the familiar stalk of a British sentry. The officer in charge of the station was holding his usual court in the room beneath the piles of the Consulate, for in that climate Europeans live as far as possible above ground-level, but as I had not the pleasure of his acquaintance and had been in other courts of the kind before, it seemed better to accept the black custom-house clerk's offer of a basket-chair in a shady corner of the veranda. The court was evidently filled to overflowing, for several groups of powerful river men crouched not far away under the watchful eyes of a Hausa sergeant. Some were clearly prisoners awaiting trial, for they had irons on their wrists, others were probably witnesses, but they all chatted and laughed together with true negro indifference of the future. The chance of destiny does not concern the untrained black man, so he makes light and most of the present.

Unsavoury odors and a murmur of voices escaped through a green-latticed window, and I pitied my comrade, who was engaged in a case within, as well as the Vice-Consul, who was sweltering inside. From previous experience I could well imagine the awful atmosphere, the trickle of foul dampness from wall and beam, and the length of the weary cases in which endless native witnesses each contradicted the other and left the judge bewildered by the conflicting testimony. The majority of the offences are connected with trade disputes, for occasionally the black Bush merchants, who act as middlemen between the white trader and the more intelligent races of the hinterland, suppress undue competition often with the flintlock gun, and recover bad debts by seizing the nearest canoe-load of merchandise and informing its unfortunate owner that he can, if strong enough, collect the amount with interest from the original defaulter. This used to be a common practice and is in a measure still in vogue. Others consist in mixing palm-kernels with dirt and empty shells, while there are not infrequently inquiries into religious murder, rites, and apparently causeless homicide. Generally the officers who try these cases are keen-witted, patient men, who make every effort to mete out even justice to all, but to succeed in every instance would severely test the wisdom of another Solomon.

These proceedings concerned me but little. I was outside in another atmosphere where the merciful sea-breeze, which sets in each afternoon, stirred the rustling palm-fronds, and I enjoyed lying disinterestedly in my basket-chair languidly chatting with the black customs clerk, while the shadows of the cottonwoods spread across the shimmering river. He was a well-educated Christian, this clerk, the product of a

Lagos mission school, and a few odd presents and commissions to purchase native curios had made him a valuable friend. The curios were interesting and rare, for among the carving and rude brassware were ancient native imitations of articles of European manufacture in the Middle Ages and a connecting-link with the Portuguese exploitation of that region five centuries ago. There are signs that the early Portuguese not only penetrated but ruled districts into which, even with steam launch and machine guns, one dare not venture, and to-day there are fastnesses among the swamps where the fetish rulers practise revolting cruelties. Headless and mutilated corpses still drift down the muddy creeks, and the sable factory hands tremble when a wandering mendicant leaves behind him some trifling and often ludicrous insignia of the mysterious Ju-Ju. Still, civilization is slowly and painfully superseding chaos and superstition, and the eagerly looked for light railway system will wonderfully and rapidly develop Western Africa.

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It was dusk when we returned in the launch to the factory. White mist arose like steam from the river, and in the absence of a breeze the heat rapidly increased. Darkness suddenly closed in, and a solemn stillness settled down on forest and water. The evening meal was not, of course, luxurious, though the traders gave us of their best. It consisted largely of tinned stuff, including pineapples, although there were plenty of fresh ones close below. The white man, however, regards this fruit with suspicion in Western Africa, and without them he always runs sufficient risk of fever and dysentery. There was also the inevitable palm-oil chop, fish, fowl, and yams all swimming in scented and highly spiced grease, which is perhaps the best dish that that region affords and is said to be a favorite medium with the native poisoner. There was also plenty of lukewarm liquor.

Supper over, we carried our lounges out upon the veranda. This was hardly prudent, but the paraffin lamps had heated the upper room to an unbearable degree, besides which the whole place swarmed with cockroaches of enormous size and moisture trickled on all sides. In spite of the fierce sun-rays it is difficult to find a dry place in either the Niger delta or the east of the Guinea coast. The delta is intersected by quagmires and countless waterways which emit an enervating steam, and on the flat beaches the film of eternal spray is almost worse.

Then we tried to drive off the mosquitoes by cigar smoke and chatted of home and the vagaries of trade, while fireflies flickered among the dew-drenched leaves and the mist shrouded all but the tops of the cottonwoods in its clammy folds. In the midst of all one could hear the beat of skin drums and quaint choruses as the Krooboy factory hands made merry about the dying fires, without which no hilarity seems

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possible, until at length the last sounds died out in the silence of the Bush and we quietly crawled drowsily under the mosquito bars on to our canvas couches. Sound sleep was, of course, hopeless, and no precaution can always prevent one or two mosquitoes getting under the net. It was therefore a relief to rise with the dawn of next morning and, though unrefreshed, to speed our way down the river on to the surf-swept coast.



NOW ALL THE TWIGS AND GRASSES

BY BLISS CARMAN

NOW all the twigs and grasses
Are feathery with snow;
The land is white and level,
The brooks have ceased to flow.

No song is in the woodland,
There is no light of sun,
But bright and warm and tender
Is my sweetheart, Yvonne.

The lower hills are purple,
The farther peaks are lost;
There's nothing left alive now,
Except the bitter frost.

Yes, two there be that heed not
How cold the year may run:
The fire upon the hearthstone,
And my sweetheart, Yvonne.



CREATION

BY CALLY RYLAND

AT dawn the Master to His garden came,
The glory of Creation in His face.
Pausing, He plucked a fruit, and smiling said:
"This one is ripe," and cast it into space.

THE CAPTURE OF THE CANTON

By *W. A. Fraser*

Author of "Mooswa," "The Eye of a God," etc.



WHEN a man is born with the temper of a deputy-governor, it does not improve it to go to sea. And if the man gets command of a ship, the temper becomes still worse, and is apt to take command of the man.

That was what was the matter with Captain Strong, a matter of eighty years ago, in command of the Canton, as she lay at her dock in the port of New York.

The Captain was an ex-naval officer, and the "ex" was a sort of perpetual delight to his erstwhile brother officers in the navy. Not but what he had good streaks about him, but the villainous temper had tried their patience sorely, and they were glad when he was out of commission.

The Canton was bound for British Columbia on a fur-trading expedition. When she sailed she carried a party of explorers and traders who were going out there in the employ of her owners. She also carried one lady passenger, Ellen Thorndyke. Miss Thorndyke was going out to join her father, who was in charge of one of the fur-trading posts. With these two elements on board,—the Captain's temper and a handsome young lady,—it was a million to one that the men, who would lie idle so many moons during the long trip around the Cape, would find some mischief to do.

If tall, handsome Fred Munroe, who was to act as chief trader to the expedition, had not fallen in love with Ellen Thorndyke, the record of the voyage of the Canton had not endured all these eighty years as a tale to be told by the dying embers, with strange, ghost-like shadows flitting about the room; for after all these eighty long years, the tale of the Canton is still fresh in the minds of dwellers on the Pacific Slope.

But that was only half of it; the Captain was also in love with her, which completed the circuit, and opened up a field for unlimited deviltry.

Bad blood makes fast when it is between strong men, and by the time the Canton touched at a small barren island in the Pacific for

water one spring morning, the Captain was ready for anything. The "anything" proved to be the hastily given order to "make sail," leaving young Munroe on the white, gleaming beach of the island with a single companion.

The Captain was remonstrated with, but he turned a passion-closed ear to their entreaties to "put about and send a boat off for Munroe."

"I command this ship," he said sullenly, "and when I give the order to get under way at ten o'clock, that means that the ship is to sail at ten o'clock, and those who are not aboard can stay ashore till we call to bring them off."

It looked rather desperate for Munroe, for the island was uninhabited and out of the track of passing vessels, and to be left there meant death to the marooned.

There was a consultation among the passengers, and then a "Round Robin" was presented to the Captain with the compliments of a committee. It was a curious, imperative sort of "Round Robin" too, as Jack Smith, a brother-like friend of Munroe's, held it up for the Captain's inspection. The throat of the "Robin" was filled with powder and ball, and the sunlight glinted ominously from the bead-like sight just back from the dark muscle which confronted Strong.

That was about the only sort of argument the Captain could understand, and as he looked along the steel barrel and into the blue eyes beyond he realized that he was beaten.

He was no coward, bully though he was, but they were as desperate as he, and there were more of them. The argument was irresistible, and within an hour Munroe and his companion were brought off to the ship.

Things went smoother after that for a time; just as Vesuvius lies quiet and peaceful after smothering the cities at her base in burning lava and hot ashes. The hate smouldered. By and by the Canton came to Na-wi-ti, where a big trade in fur was expected.

That was after they had left Astoria, at the mouth of the Columbia River. There Ellen Thorndyke had joined her father, who was in charge of the fort at Astoria.

At Na-wi-ti Munroe went ashore to trade with the Indians.

As the Captain had been to the whites, so was he to the Indians who came on board the ship—harsh and domineering. This made the Indians distrustful, and filled them with covetous, revengeful thoughts.

Their Chief, Wa-nook, was no more an angel than Captain Strong; besides, killing was to him as the potting of ducks—the only distinction in the slaughter of game to be considered being the difficulty thereof.

"It will be easy," he assured the others that night as they sat in a circle about the fire in the big ranch; "Wa-nook will prepare the e'-a-ke-nook against this devil Chief who treats us as the dog-fish treats the moon, and when it is complete we will rise up and kill him and the cursed whitefaces who are of his bidding. Wa-nook will do all this, I say; he, who is your chief; and as you pull the fish out of the sea, so shall you throw their bodies out of the big canoe with its white wings. And all that is theirs shall be ours, and the furs that are here shall abide here. Then shall Wa-nook give a potlatch like unto that which his father gave when your fathers slew the Ninkish."

Words of wisdom these, the others thought, for was not deviltry wisdom with the Na-wi-ti, and was not Wa-nook prince of the devils? Had he not before given them slaughter, and plunder, and potlatch greater than any other chief?

"The Chief that is here among us," said Wa-nook, "is not like this devil that keeps the canoe, for he is like a brother, but also will he fight, therefore must he die too, lest we get not the things which are there."

Then they traded liberally with Munroe, making his heart glad with the piles of fur they brought him; and he slept with them, and traded with them, and was happy. The commission that would come to him from his great bargains would smooth the way for the little marriage he had talked over so quietly with Ellen.

And Wa-nook and the other old Indian, as close unto the devil as was Wa-nook himself, went off to the ship unarmed and bearing a handsome robe as a present to the Captain. He received them surlily, taking the robe as one takes an apple that falls from the tree—quite as a matter of course.

But this did not matter to Wa-nook, he had his mission to fulfil, and the reckoning would come after. If he could get but a lock of the Captain's hair, or a piece of his sleeve, or of the rim of his hat, or anything which had received the perspiration from his body, he would prepare an e-a-ke-nook charm, which, buried in the ground in a human skull, would quickly place the Captain's destiny in his hands.

Soon he saw the Captain put his hat down for an instant. His ready knife was out, and quicker than a fish takes the bait, he had a piece of the rim hid away in his clothes.

When the Captain put his hat on again, his thumb rubbed against a jagged edge which was not there when he had taken it off. He could not understand it; in fact, understanding things was not much in his line, but it was something to resent.

He called the Interpreter, and through him accused Wa-nook of the sacrilege. Of course, the Chief denied it, but that did not make

any difference; it ended by Wa-nook receiving a blow in the face from the Captain's fist, which sent him sprawling.

That sealed the Captain's doom. Whether the charm worked or not after that, Wa-nook meant to have his assailant's head to decorate a post just in front of the big ranch.

The Interpreter told the Captain to look out for trouble after this, but he only laughed at him. "I could lick a shipload of those niggers myself," he said in his disdainful, insolent way. "That blow will teach him better, and he won't bother me any more."

And it really seemed as though the Captain's words were true, for the blow seemed to have humbled Wa-nook completely. He and his men came off quietly in single canoe-loads unarmed, and traded their furs in the most liberal spirit on the ship. This put the Captain in a good-humor; he smiled grimly as he thought that he would get more fur on board than Munroe got in the village. So he in turn gave them liberal bargains, and things were running along more smoothly than they had been for some time. "If something would only happen Munroe," he thought to himself, "off there among those niggers, I dare say all the money I'd make over this trip would help to win Miss Ellen around to my way of thinking." That was his idea of "the grand passion." He knew more about getting into a passion than he did about the working of one.

Thus Wa-nook hatched the deviltry he was planning, brooding moodily over the blow he had received from the Captain. He had buried the charm, and all the tribe had great faith in its efficacy, for Wa-nook was a great e-a-ke-nook among them. But all this quiet did not deceive the Interpreter, for he knew their ways, even as he knew the ways of himself, for he was a half-breed. Captain Strong laughed scornfully whenever he mentioned the subject to him. Then he went to Munroe and told him, and Munroe spoke to the Captain, but the result was the same—a polite invitation to "mind your own business!"

By the fourth day the ship was simply overrun with Indian traders, and the water about her was alive with their canoes. It seemed as though the Canton would do the greatest trading business that had ever been done.

"We shall take home fur enough to make us all rich," said the Captain to the Interpreter; "but if I were afraid of these niggers, as you would have me, I should get nothing."

Munroe could get nothing in the village now, so he was forced to abandon his post and go back to the ship. At this the Captain laughed immoderately. "You're a great trader," he said insultingly, "and a good fellow too. You go ashore to the village to trade, feed the natives on pap until they get sick of you, and come off to trade with me:" and he pointed to the thronged deck derisively.

The natives seemed so peaceable that even the Interpreter was thrown off his guard, and they were allowed to come and go now pretty much as they liked.

The morning after the Captain had spoken to Munroe broke hot and close. The sun shone through a smoky atmosphere, a lurid ball. Scarcely a breath of air stirred the lazy folds of the ensign which hung listlessly at the peak.

The whole village of Na-wi-ti seemed to be afloat; the water was dark with their canoes; they were hurrying in with the last of their trade, for the Canton was to sail and work her way over the bar at the turn of the tide next morning. The sailors were putting the ship in trim for her return voyage, and the others were idling about the deck.

Nobody noticed that the Indians wore loose cloaks thrown over their shoulders and about their loins.

Canoe after canoe shot up alongside the ship, and the occupants clambered over the wooden rail and helped to throng the deck.

Suddenly a wild, fierce cry broke from the lips of Wa-nook. Instantly the body of every Na-wi-ti glistened in the dead sunlight; the cloaks had been thrown from their shoulders—and they were armed. Then the slaughter began. The whites were unarmed and outnumbered ten to one, and the cunning Na-wi-ti had taken care to work in between them so that they were separated. The Captain and Munroe instinctively made a rush for the cabin, where the arms were kept. A solid wall of Na-wi-ti stood between them and the companion-way. Munroe had chanced on a belaying-pin, and with this he fought his way through the mass in front of him.

The Captain was fighting with a clasp-knife, the only weapon he could lay his hands on. A score of pushing, fighting, demoniac Indians surrounded him, thrusting and striking at him with their war-clubs and swords. In peace his temper was not over-sweet, and now he fought like a demon. Three times the knife was driven home in a dark body, and three treacherous Na-wi-ti lay dead on the deck.

Then up rose Wa-nook in front of him, like an evil spectre. A savage look of exultant fury was in every curved line of his ferocious face. "Now, white Chief!" he yelled in Na-wi-ti, "Wa-nook will give back blow for blow. Stand back!" he screamed to the other Indians, "he is mine! The e-a-ke-nook has given him into my hands. I, your Chief, Wa-nook, will kill the white Chief!"

He swung his mighty pantu-maugau, half sword and half club, just as Captain Strong rushed at him with his drawn knife. But Wa-nook was too quick for Strong; the Chief's weapon came crashing down through his frail guard and stretched him senseless on the deck. With a yell of triumph Wa-nook raised his weapon to strike again, but

as he did so there was the sharp crack of a pistol, and he tumbled forward in a heap on the deck.

Then Munroe darted forward from the cabin door, for he it was who had fired the shot, and, grasping the Captain's body, dragged him into the cabin and bolted the door.

The natives had been too much startled by the shot to offer any resistance. It was the one thing they were afraid of—the white man's firearms; besides, the boatswain, who had managed to escape to the cabin too, had been covering Munroe's retreat.

Then the Na-wi-ti gave the cabin a wide berth, for Munroe and the boatswain opened fire on them from the window. They went to the assistance of their other tribesmen, and soon they were in full possession of the ship. With the exception of those in the cabin, not a white man was left alive of all that crew.

While the boatswain kept watch at the window Munroe tried to revive the Captain. After a long time he succeeded, and Strong opened his eyes in a dazed, bewildered sort of way; but Munroe could see that the poor, battered body before him would not long hold the life which was flickering so feebly, like the last slender flame in a dying fire.

When the Captain had quite regained consciousness, he spoke to Munroe. All the bully had gone, all the harsh arrogance; only the brave qualities of the man remained, for he had been brave.

"You must not waste time over me, mate—I may call you mate now, for though we have been enemies, and all my fault too, yet you tried to save my life just now, and I am dying. You must try to get away from the ship alive, for there is a little woman waiting for you. Yes, I loved her too, and it's for her sake as much as for yours that I am going to do this thing—this thing of which I am now to speak. You must call a parley with the natives. Show them a white flag—they will know what that means; and if you can make them understand that you will give up the ship to them if they will let you go off in my gig, which is lying astern, then I will hold the ship for you until you are well clear, and I will undertake that not one of them follows you. But first you must lay a fuse to the magazine for me, and I will wipe out the score with one wipe."

Munroe was staggered with this proposal and flatly refused to have anything to do with it.

"It's no use," said the Captain, "I can't live. I could not live to get over the bar, if I could get away. Their knives have pierced me so that I am bleeding internally." And so it was. Even as he talked to them choking fits took possession of him, and it seemed as though he might die any moment.

"You cannot hold out against them here," he continued; "they

will loot the ship, and then burn her to the water's edge. It will be no lives lost and two lives saved, so far as we are concerned, for I am as good as dead now. And I have some money there in my locker, which I want you to take to my mother, who is dependent on me for support."

Munroe and the boatswain held out for a long time. The Captain was growing weaker physically, but not in his determination.

"In a few hours I shall be dead," he said, "and you too."

From the window Munroe saw that of all the crew only the Interpreter was alive; the Indians had spared him, perhaps, for the purpose of making use of him for his knowledge of the two languages.

Towards evening, seeing that the Captain could not last much longer, Munroe gave in, and waved a white handkerchief out of the cabin window. Soon two of the leading Indians came forward, pushing the Interpreter in front of them.

Munroe made the proposition to them, stipulating that the Interpreter and the Captain be allowed to accompany them.

The Na-wi-ti readily assented, for they knew that the part of the loot they were most anxious for—the liquor—was in the cabin, and while the white men were there with their firearms they could not get at it. "We will get them when the night falls," they thought, "anyway, for the tide is beating in over the bar now, and they cannot get out."

The gig was hurriedly got ready, water, provisions, and arms put in, and then Munroe asked the Captain to let them put him in also. But this he refused flatly. "We should all be killed before morning," he said; "at least you would, for I have not many hours to live anyway. Just lay the fuse for me to the magazine, and place me where I can touch it off, and hurry while I have strength to do it."

It was a bitter thing to do,—to leave one of their number behind,—and Munroe picked him up bodily, determined to carry him into a gig. As he did so the blood spurted from the Captain's lips, a ghastly pallor spread over his face, and his head fell back limply.

"He's gone!" said the boatswain, in an awe-stricken whisper.

Munroe laid him tenderly down on a sofa in the cabin and poured a little brandy down his throat. Presently he opened his eyes again; they waited.

Soon he motioned Munroe close to him, and in a voice that Munroe had to strain his ear to catch, said: "I am going—not with you, but somewhere else. Go, I pray you, for Ellen's sake and my mother's. Place me where I can touch the fuse. It is awful, but there is no other way."

There was no other way. Munroe saw that, and at last complied with his wishes.

He touched his lips to the forehead of the already dying man.

"For her sake," whispered Strong.

Munroe bolted and fastened the cabin door to keep the savages out while he and his mates got clear of the ship; then they quickly dropped through the open stern-ports into the gig.

The impatient Na-wi-ti rushed aft, uttering fierce, exultant cries as the little boat shot out from under the stern. But the strong oaken door stood like a barrier between them and the prize. Munroe could see them battering at it with their clubs and swords, snarling and pushing among themselves like wild beasts. All the Indians were on the ship now, and her decks were black with their bodies.

Some of them brought a loose spar and swung it as a battering-ram. There was a crash as the door gave way, and the big spar went through, carrying some of the Na-wi-ti with it.

Before they had time to pick themselves up there was a roar. A column of water shot into the air, carrying with it shattered fragments of wood and torn bodies.

The sea receded for a moment in all directions until a great hollow was scooped out of its level surface; then the waters rushed hungrily over the spot again, and only a few floating spars told where the Na-wi-ti had captured the Canton.



SAINT VALENTINE, HIS TOMB

BY CLINTON SCOLLARD

IN the old days of cruelty and gloom,
When those who owned Christ's faith on bended knees
Were by the Cæsar's barbarous decrees
Tortured, and hurled upon a doleful doom,
On Valentinus, in the summer-bloom
Of his well-doing, did the soldiers seize,
And mete out judgment. In Saint Praxedes
Lovers to-day strew flowers upon his tomb.

There would I lay a garland wreathed of sweet
Blue violets that twin my true love's eyes,
And delicate wild roses, faintly red;
Such offering unto the Saint were meet,
Since through his intercession, whisper-wise,
Love's dearest word unto mine ears was said.

A GAME OF CHESS

By Clinton Dangerfield



WHAT did it matter to me if she was the General's daughter, what that I was still merely a lieutenant? When does love take trifles like that into account? Also I might as well mention that he was a general on the wrong side, the side which had given us so much trouble. In a word, the man whom I elected as father-in-law to be, though he wasn't aware of my choice, was a hardened old campaigner of forty-nine, afflicted with rheumatism that kept him awake at night and gave him leisure to plan the most disagreeable surprises for us.

When the first of May came our armies were lying very near each other, and it required wary walking in all directions. Therefore when I informed my good comrade Heinrich that I purposed stealing out that night for a glimpse of Mademoiselle Mars he assured me that I was mad. I answered that I had heard such assertions before and had discovered them to be baseless, therefore I was going. And so, in spite of his mingled threats and entreaties, I crept out into the shadows.

When at home I used to spend days in the forest, and 'tis marvellous what a quick ear and a velvet foot will do for a man with the pickets. One by one I passed them all, step by step I drew nearer to the house where my love was quartered, for she was heroine enough to accompany her father, and he confident enough to believe himself invincible and therefore able to guard her. Closer, closer I drew. At last I was in the very garden of the old mansion and, thank Heaven! found gloriously thick shrubbery to shelter me. There I paused, for behold, not far away was an open window and near that window a piano, and by that piano the loveliest woman in the world. She was singing, not loudly, but in a soft, restrained key, singing a minor song of love and longing. I thought I was near the gates of Paradise, for something told me that the sweet loneliness in that voice meant that she was thinking of a certain Lieutenant von Rohritz, whom she had met before this detestable war was brewing. I could almost swear to the very waltz of ours on which her mind was lingering, and creeping, creeping, I drew closer still.

Her notes faltered; a second more, and I would have been tempted to spring through that window and console her, when suddenly, as though resolved to cast away all sadness, she threw back her beautiful

head and burst into that cursed Marseillaise, singing with a fire and abandon of which I never dreamed her capable, singing the war-song of all war-songs best calculated to stir fire in her countrymen. I drew back like one struck in the face. I consigned to perdition the man who wrote the detestable lines and the fellow who set them to music, and, wahrlich, I did so yet more truly when I saw the soldiers flocking to listen and discovered that her words had drawn a veritable cordon round me.

Nearer they came—nearer yet. On throbbed the wonderful voice, and to my imagination it changed to a death chant. I glanced around in desperation. Evidently she encouraged their coming, and in three minutes more I would be discovered!

By this time I was almost at the edge of the wide piazza, and there, lying on the ground, I spied a soldier's coat, the hateful uniform of my enemies. Temptation seized me, the frightful temptation that so often is the soldier's undoing. I had but to slip on the coat, to mingle with the Frenchmen, and I might yet escape unobserved. "But the consequences," whispered a warning thought in my ear,—*"the consequences if you are taken."*

"And if I do not wear it, I will be taken," I urged to myself in return, "I will surely be taken, and, Gott in Himmel, the weary months of imprisonment, the loss of all promotion!"

"But if you should not escape with the coat—the danger, the terrible danger—a spy's death!"

I wavered. I almost resolved to suffer the result of my folly openly, then the soldiers' voices took up the chorus of the war-song,—

*"Aux armes, citoyens,
Formes nos bataillons!"*

"To the devil with your battalions and you too," I whispered. "One German can outwit the lot of you."

I slipped on the coat, glided into the shadow, and mingled boldly with the throng.

Presently the song ceased, and Mademoiselle herself came to the piazza. How the soldiers cheered her as she stood there smiling, her fearless blue eyes shining on them, her cloud of golden hair just touched by the lamplight!

"Ah, mes braves," she cried, "your singing makes me almost wish myself a man."

"Then we should not fight for you as we do, Mamzelle," cried a vieux mustache.

"Hein!" shouted the General himself, suddenly appearing at the door. "What's that? So you wouldn't fight as well for me, eh? Ah, ah,—you don't know that Mamzelle has one terrible fault!"

"That we don't believe," said the old mustache, so flatly that I could not help approving him.

"But she has," returned their General. "She always beats her own father—in chess! She never lets me have one little game, and she has the assurance to say that she can outplay any man that ever lived. Peste! she marches her knights and bishops down on you so fiercely that there's no escape. Do you know what I mean to do? Some day when we have wiped those German pigs off the earth I shall find some brave fellow who can win a game from her, and he shall—take the queen when he checkmates the king. But there—off with you!"

They turned, grinning and half cheering over his last speech, and I muttered in a rage to myself at the name given my countrymen and his freedom in jesting over his daughter. Then Clarice's clear voice cried:

"But wait, mes braves. That coat I made old Pierre give me that I might have it properly mended,—where is it? You know his right hand was badly wounded and I am going to darn it myself."

Heaven! how I cursed the weakness which had betrayed me. They surged back, carrying me with them, and suddenly a voice hissed:

"Who is this rascal in old Pierre's coat? There's the tear on the shoulder."

I was in for it! They dragged me up the steps, the coat was torn off, and there I stood, facing the purple-faced General and his startled daughter clad in my proper uniform—one of the hated Uhlans! I saw Clarice grow white as death, then her lips shaped one word, but so softly that only her father and I heard,—

"Caspar!"

Ah, rapture! She had never called me so before! I bowed to the ground, enraging the old General yet more.

"Dog of a spy!" he ground out, "how dare you bow to my daughter? Bring him in here, Corporal, and you, Clarice—get you gone!"

The change in him was complete. Every vestige of playfulness gone, he stood glaring at me, hawk-nosed, eagle-eyed, a very bird of prey in expression.

"So, Monsieur," he said, and his tones were like ice, "this is the way you Germans serve your country, is it,—playing a spy's part?"

I glanced round the room for Clarice,—we had gone in,—but she was nowhere visible.

"General," I said quietly, "if I may see you alone, I will tell you exactly why I came and how I came to wear this coat."

He signalled abruptly to his men, and they left him after searching and disarming me.

"Well," he said curtly, sitting at ease while I stood before him, "explain—if you can!"

I told him—all, simply and clearly, and then half regretted it, so

bitter a light crept into his stern old eyes, and I perceived how little his playful mood of the few moments ago had had to do with the man's true character.

"And so, Monsieur," he said, with a sudden change to a suave irony that I did not fancy at all, "and so you did all this for the sake of my daughter. I do recall you now. You are that officer, that penniless lieutenant, who hung so devotedly about her in Paris before this trouble began. I am most honored."

"I am not penniless now," I returned coolly, "I have since inherited a modest fortune."

"Indeed? And pray, Monsieur, if I may ask, have you no inducements to offer in yourself besides this same fortune? The teller of so pretty a tale should be accomplished."

I felt myself flushing hotly. Then I said daringly:

"A thousand thanks for your inquiry, sir. I can play chess."

"You miserable German," he began, then swallowed his words and said as smoothly as ever:

"Indeed? Most interesting! Are you a good player?"

"Yes," I said confidently, and, in truth, I had yet to meet a superior player, though, of course, I had never dealt with professionals.

"Hm!" he pursued, caressing his mustache, a wicked look gleaming in his old eyes, "then I think we shall let your chess-playing settle your fate. Now listen to me. We are like to have a quiet evening, and I do not object to a little relaxation. Therefore my daughter shall return and you—shall play with her."

"With her," I echoed, amazed, for it was plain I had not heard all.

"Yes, with her, Monsieur. If you win, you shall return to your camp."

"Oh, Monsieur," I cried, starting forward, "your generosity——"

"If you lose, you shall be strung up near the guard-house at sunrise and die as the spy that you probably are."

The blood fled in to my heart. I roused my courage and sent it back again. What had I to fear? With my finesse and skill I could win from any amateur. And my darling would see my anxiety and would not strive too hard!

"I accept," I answered, bowing.

He rose. "Understand one thing. You are to give me your pledge that neither by word nor sign will you let her know your peril. She is to think it but an ordinary game."

"I promise," I said slowly.

"Very well." He called his Corporal. "Ask Mademoiselle Mars if she will kindly join me."

The Corporal bowed and vanished, and presently my love appeared.

I read the keen anxiety on her face, and so, unfortunately, did her father. I heard him mutter under his breath. Then he said quietly:

"Ma fille, this gentleman is a friend of yours, it seems. I had forgotten him."

"Oh, yes, papa," she murmured. "You know, of course, that he was not really a spy?"

"No doubt he is above suspicion," returned her father dryly. "Well, Clarice, he has been captured and we must make things amusing for him. To that end you will play a game of chess. He thinks he can beat you with ease."

"Indeed?" She tossed her bright head and looked at me coldly. Quite sure that I was safe, the softness melted from her eyes. She remembered again that I was an enemy. But she indicated the chess-board with a wave of her hand, and I hastened to bring it for her. She would be courteous and no more, and I could see she was slightly piqued by her father's order to amuse me.

We seated ourselves, and the General, after calling in his Corporal and murmuring a few words to him, sent the man away and drew his own chair near to us.

The game began, and I made a desperate endeavor to pull myself together. My situation was cruel beyond words. Before me sat the girl I adored, and in her slender fingers lay life or death. And yet she knew it not! Once, as I made my gambit, I glanced across to a mirror and saw the General's face, and his look sickened me—so viciously heartless was his cynical amusement in the little drama he had created for himself. I began to recall the tales told of his youth—how the peasants, from whom he sprang, had nicknamed him *Cœur d'acier*, "Heart of Steel," and how it was said Clarice alone moved him to any gentleness. I understood how little chance of mercy there was if I failed—I, one of the enemy he hated, who would make love to the one human being he held dear. I understood how great must be his faith in her skill that he was willing to punish me in this way. A wave of foreboding swept over me, then anger roused me again and I played quietly, steadily, then brilliantly.

I saw with exultation that my presence exercised an influence over Clarice—how strong I could not judge, but she faltered in her playing, she retreated when she should have advanced, and presently she lost a rook. A dark scowl rose to the General's face. I fancied his internal whispers. Spurred on by success, my brain grew clearer. I forgot the horrible cord hanging over me. I made a coup after a subtle approach, and lo, her queen was taken!

An oath that he could not quite repress rose to her father's lips, and a hot blush of shame stained my love's cheeks, for the General cast a taunting look at her as who should say,—

"Are you so interested in this fellow that you cannot play?"

And that look was my undoing. She covered her confusion with a merry laugh.

"Ça va bien, Monsieur—that goes well—for you. But wait, we shall see—all is not yet lost."

"By Heaven, no," I said, "all is not lost!"

She flashed another look at me, then dropped her dainty chin into her white hand and set to work to slay the man before her. My God, I shiver when I recall the next hour! The lamp burned near us, and winged creatures, poor moths and beetles, fluttered in and dropped into the flame. Once a scorched body fell like an evil omen upon my king, and the General smiled. The atmosphere in the room seemed stifling. Clarice herself began to grow as it were far away, and her face to take on new outlines—the outlines of the Medusa I had once seen. I lost a bishop, followed by two pawns. I dared not play too slowly! I feared to play too fast! and ever beside me smiled the mocking face of the commander, growing momentarily more satisfied in his expression. Then I became aware of figures stealing in, and the same crowd of soldiers was in the background leaning forward with eager faces, looking malice at me and adoration at "Mamzelle."

This last piece of cruelty roused me to new courage. What! could he not be content to watch my agony alone, but must his evil caprice share it with his men? And doubtless he had boasted of his generosity in letting the German spy play for his life and with Mademoiselle. Chess is a difficult game at any time. None but myself know the nightmare it may become when twenty pairs of eyes bend maledictions on you and follow every move in the hope it may be your last. Clarice herself showed a touch of surprise, but she was too used to the soldiers to pay any attention and was good-naturedly willing that the game should amuse them. She was playing daringly, wonderfully,—enmeshing my men in a fatal web with every step. It seemed as though the loss of her queen—always the most valuable piece on the board—was all she needed to bring out her fine powers.

And I? God help me, I kept my face as unmoved as I could, trying to play like a soldier, trying to lose gallantly if I must, but every fresh triumph of my love stung me with two pains—one that my life was ebbing, and the other, and the bitterest, that she in her unconsciousness should have been made my executioner. My second bishop went—they are always my favorite pieces—and my queen was in danger. I felt the cold sweat rise to my brow in beads, and as I wiped it away I saw the nearest soldier point at my damp forehead mockingly. Then Clarice laughed, a silver peal of merriment.

"Don't look so serious, Monsieur the enemy. Surely you know the French always win?"

"You have not won yet," I said, and she looked at me in astonishment, so hoarse, so changed was my voice.

"Not yet, but wait——"

I had not long to wait. Presently the General said, with a sharp click, like the jaws of a snapping wolf,—

"Checkmated!"

I rose and bowed to my antagonist, who, flushed with pleasure, lay back and smiled in her chair.

"As he says, *Mademoiselle*, I am indeed—checkmated!"

"You take the game so earnestly," said Clarice, "you must be glad to have it over."

"Yes," I said quietly, "I am glad that it is over," and that was only the truth. The last hour had been such torture as I never thought to endure, and now I hoped for only one thing—that she might never know what she had done.

The next instant the General said to his men:

"*Mes braves*, behold a true daughter of France! You heard her wish to be a man that she might fight at your side, and now she has proved her loyalty to the great Republic. With skill, not strength, she has sent this rascal to a deserved halter!"

"Father," cried the girl, "for Heaven's sake, what are you saying? I send this man to a halter! I, who——"

I stepped forward and interrupted her.

"Monsieur," I said, "spare your daughter any further account of this. For her sake—for your manhood!"

He flamed with rage.

"*Mille diables!* do I need you to teach me? You who shall rot in a disgraced grave? All my army shall know that you played for your life with my Clarice, that she won and sent you where you belong."

They answered with a loud hurrah. For an instant I thought it must be some passing nightmare, then I remembered that in these wild days of France military commanders were despots, answerable to few indeed. And Clarice? When that cheer died away she came forward, and, snatching up the lamp, held it to her father's face. There she read what he had done, read with her woman's wit that he had divined her interest in me and had punished us both. She would have dropped the lamp but that the Corporal caught it. Then she turned to me with such horror in her great eyes that I could have killed myself for taking the chance of the game.

"I am a murderer," she cried, "and I have killed—you!" Then darkness fell on her, and she lay white and senseless at my feet.

They would not let me stay by her. They tore me away as roughly as they could and threw me into a stout guard-house, and there I sat until late into the night, my hands pressed on my brow, wondering how

one little world could hold so much wretchedness. The sentry thrust his head in the door:

"See thou here," he said brusquely, "there is a priest without. Wouldst thou have him?"

"Admit him," I said wearily. To say truth, I am a good Protestant, but in the misery of my thoughts I so longed for a touch of human sympathy that I resolved to confess as though I had been a Catholic, and perhaps the man of God would tell me if I had been as damnable as I seemed in letting my dear one play that game.

The priest, a short, fat man, glided in, and without more ado I knelt at his feet. To my surprise he checked me at once.

"Nay, nay, stay!" he said gruffly. "I've too many sins of my own to hear those of others! Hark thee—canst use file and rope when need falls?"

I sprang up, light as a feather.

"God bless you," I choked, "give it me!"

"When all is quiet," cautioned the seeming priest. "Heaven forgive me who have so imitated our good father Anselm! But what can a poor man do when an aristocrat like Mamzelle throws her pretty self at his feet and swears by all the saints in the calendar that she will be haunted forever if you are hung? And, in truth, the General treated her scurvily. We all thought she knew the stakes. But hark you, get out as softly as may be, and 'ware the passing of the sentinel. There'll be a lad to guide you."

"And Mademoiselle," I whispered, "am I not to see her again, not to have one word of parting?"

"Parting!" returned the soldier furiously, "the devil! You are of no interest to her beyond her woman's squeamishness not wanting your neck wrung because of her skill! Peste, get you gone as soon as you may!"

He left me, and you may swear it was not long before my feet touched earth. I heard the lad's voice whisper "Follow!" and like ghosts we glided into the shadows—on and on till we were past all danger.

We stood in the fair rays of the moon, and I for one bore a thankful heart. I turned to my guide. What a slip of a lad he was, after all! Then a wild current shot through my veins. That figure, that glint of gold under the cap! I sprang forward. I caught away the cap.

"Clarice!" I cried. "Oh, beloved! beloved!"

She looked up from my arms, half tears, half smiles.

"Alas! I dare not return," she said. "And besides, did you not—take the queen?"

BROTHER JOHNSING'S 'SPERIENCE

By Ella Middleton Tybout



"A N' all true b'lievahs o' de wo'de o' de Lawd am axed tuh be in dey places on nex' Chuesday night at de wotch-meetin'. We'se a-g'wine tuh wotch de Ole Yeah out an' de New Yeah in, an' I hopes dat many will be moved by de Sperit tuh give in dey 'sperience on dat solemn 'casion.

"Befo' we jines in singin' de las' hymn we'll pass roun' de hat onct mo', and 'tain't no mannah o' use fuh de young men on de back benches tuh be aidgin' todes de do', caze it am locked."

So saying, Brother Eli Wiggins, pastor of Little Bethel, Poketown's principal church, wiped his brow with his red bandanna and sat down. He had been eloquent indeed that morning, and his face glistened with beads of perspiration, the result of his efforts to point out to his flock the straight and narrow way.

The congregation slowly dispersed, discussing the watch-meeting as they walked down the one long, straggling street which composed the settlement known as Poketown and inhabited solely by the African race.

"I wondah now," remarked Aunt Martha Young reflectively, as she paused at her front gate for a few last words, "ef Brothah Sam'l Johnsing's g'wine tuh come tuh de wotch-meetin'. Has yo' spoke wid him lately, Uncl' William?"

"Yo' ain' got no call tuh give him de name o' brothah, Aun' Ma'thy," replied Uncle William Stafford, shaking his gray head impressively. "I'se feard dat Sam'l Johnsing am backslidin' too fas' tuh evah git redimption. 'Peahs like ole Satan done got hol' him ag'in good an' tight, an' I reckon he's g'wine tuh keep him dis time."

"We'se g'wine tuh miss him at de wotch-meetin' when it comes tuh givin' in 'speriences. Mistah Johnsing am pow'ful gifted in dat line," said Aunt Martha with a decided emphasis on the prefix.

"I done hyah tell," remarked Aunt Janty Gibbs, who shared with the first two speakers the rights of seniority in Poketown, "I done hyah tell dat he say he kin 'splain it all ef he gits a chance."

"'Splain it all, kin he?" said Aunt Martha with an indignant snort. "I'd like tuh hyah him 'splain leavin' his wife wid dat passel o' chillen tuh suppo't an' settin' up tuh co't de yallah gal f'om de Crossroads right undah huh nose. I'd like tuh hyah him 'splain dat."

"Dat's so, Aun' Ma'thy, dat's so," said Uncle William approvingly. "He mought tell easy 'nuff huccum dat speckled pullet undah his coat; he mought make us b'lieve dat it's rheumatiz b'liges him tuh keep dat black bottle in his pocket; an' he mought tell us huccum dat one-eyed shoat o' hisn so like de one dat's missin' f'om my pen, but he can't 'splain leavin' his wife like he done; he can't 'splain dat nohow."

When the night of the watch-meeting arrived Poketown turned out handsomely; among others appeared Mr. Samuel Johnson boldly escorting the yellow girl from the Crossroads and apparently oblivious of indignant glances cast upon him from all directions. Brother Wiggins rose to address the meeting.

"Hit am meh painful duty," he said, after the opening hymn had been liped out and sung with much gusto, "tuh look ovah de faces befo' me an' separate de wheat f'om de chaff; de sheep f'om de goats."

An uneasy rustle pervaded the congregation, as though many were in doubt regarding the class to which they belonged.

"De true an' faithful," resumed the pastor, "will set in de benches on de right han'. Dem as has nevah got 'ligion will set in de middle row of benches, and we'll labah wid 'em an' hope de sperrit o' de Lawd will move dey hahts to-night. But dem as has onct got 'ligion an' backslid, dem as is walkin' ahm-in-ahm wid Satan, an' dem as is indulgin' in scan'lous conduc', will set in de benches on de lef'-han' side. Dat dey sha'n't be no mistake, an' no chance o' de sheep gittin' mixed up wid de goats, I'll call de names o' de faithful fust; den de onregin'rit. Dem as is lef' uncalled knows whut dey is 'thout no mo' wo'ds f'om me, an' will go whah dey b'longs."

This classification filled the benches on the right to overflowing; it also crowded the middle row somewhat uncomfortably with the youth of the congregation, among them the yellow girl from the Crossroads; while quite alone in the left-hand benches, calm and undisturbed, sat Mr. Samuel Johnson,—a solitary goat. And the meeting proceeded as usual.

The first hour or two were devoted to alternate prayers and hymns, instigated by one or the other of the congregation, but as ten o'clock approached Brother Wiggins again arose for a few remarks.

"De houah am come," he announced in solemn accents, "fuh me tux ax' yo' all tuh 'membah whut yo'se hyah fo'; de time am rollin' roun'——"

"Roll, Jordan, roll," shouted an excitable sister.

The refrain was taken up by all present, and the hymn sung through from beginning to end.

"De Ole Yeah am mighty nigh gone," continued the preacher, when he could make himself heard, "we ain' got but two houahs lef' befo' de New Yeah am g'wine tuh be 'mongst us. It's a-smilin' an' a-beckonin'

tuh us now. De New Yeah am pow'ful 'ceitful, meh brothahs; it am sayin' tuh yo' dat its ways am broad an' easy walkin', 'thout no stony places, er mud puddles tuh wet yo' feet. It am a-callin' tuh yo, 'Come on, meh frien's, I'se g'wine tuh make it smooth travellin' fuh yo'.

"Don' yo' b'lieve it, meh brothahs; don' yo' trus' it, meh sistahs. Huccum one yeah different f'om anothah yeah? Tell me dat. Ain' it de same ole sun a-risin' an' a-settin' dat was a-risin' an' a-settin' las' yeah? Ain' it de same old light an' dahkness, de same ole heat an' col'? An' mo' en all, ain' it de same ole moon a-smirkin' an' a-smilin' up dah in de sky? Tell me dat. Ain' it de same ole moon dat's drewed many intuh trouble befo' dey knowed it?"

"Amen. Dat's so," arose from the benches on the right.

"Bewhah o' de moon, meh brothahs; tuhn yo' backs tuh it, meh sistahs, 'specially de spring an' summah moon. Dat's de time tuh wotch an' pray. It am pow'ful easy tuh do right wintah nights when de kitchen stove am buhnin' hot, an' yo' feet gits fros'-bit ef yo' goes outside, but when de spring comes creepin' on yo', wid de frogs a-croakin' in de ditches, an' de breezes blowin' sof' ovah yo', how 'bout dat? Kin yo' membah de Commandmints when de harves' moon am hangin' in de sky, big an' raid? When de smell o' de wil' grape fills yo' nose, an' de katydid's am callin' tuh yo',—how 'bout dat? When yo' heels am lightah den yo' haid, an' somethin' sends de blood a-chasin' thu yo' veins,—how 'bout dat? When de cawn am standin' in de shocks, an' de watahmillions am a-layin' on de vines, fit tuh bus' wid ripeness an' glistenin' wid de dew,—how 'bout dat? Does yo' membah de Commandmints den?"

He paused for breath and closely scanned the faces before him.

"De time am passin'," he resumed, "de Ole Yeah am mos' gone. Ain' yo' got nothin' tuh say, meh frien's? Is yo' g'wine tuh shake han's wid de New Yeah 'thout givin' in no 'sperience tuh he'p yo' git thu it? Uncl' William Staffo'd, yo'se de oldest membah hyah, ain' yo' got nothin' tuh say? Aun' Janty Gibbs, huccum de sperrit not tuh move yo' dis las' night? Ain' de Lawd done nothin' fuh nobody dis yeah 'cept whut dey's 'shamed tuh mention?"

Uncle William Stafford rose slowly to his feet.

"Brothah Wiggins," he said impressively, "I feels it meh juty to tell yo' dat dey won' be no 'speriences guv in dis evenin'. When I done hyah tell dat Mistah Sam'l Johnsing whuh g'wine tuh be hyah tuh night, bol' ez brass wid all his backslidin' onrepented, I was 'stonished, dat's whut I was,—'stonished, an' I didn' feel like comin' hyah nohow. But I didn't trus' mehse'f, Brothah Wiggins; no, suh, dat's whut I didn'. I done went tuh see Aun' Ma'thy Young, an' we insulted an' insulted ovah de mattah; den we axed in Aun' Janty Gibbs, an' *she* insulted, an' we done come tuh de seclusion dat ef yo' 'lowed de snake

in de pusson o' Mistah Sam'l Johnsing tuh entah de meetin' dis evenin', dah shouldn' be no 'speriences guv in by dem as tries tuh keep dey feet f'om slippin' f'om de path dat Abraham, Isaac, an' Jacob done set fuh us tuh walk in. Dat's all, Brothah Wiggins."

Uncle William sat down with much dignity, and Aunt Janty Gibbs took the floor.

"Whut Uncl' William done say," she remarked, "am gospel tru'f. Dey won' be no movin' o' de sperrit ez long ez Mistah Johnsing sets up dah so biggoty an' brazen. Ef he kin 'splain 'bout leavin' his wife and fambly tuh shif' fuh deyselves an' 'bout de way he's been g'wine on lately, now's de time fuh him tuh up an' do it; ef he can't 'splain dis nohow, now's de time fuh him tuh git outen de sight o' 'speckable folks. Dat's de seclusion we'se all come tuh, Brothah Wiggins, an' dey won' be no movin' o' de sperrit ez long ez dat low-lived niggah sets up in dat bench 'thout sayin' nothin'."

Aunt Janty resumed her seat amid a low murmur of approval. Brother Wiggins was somewhat embarrassed as to the proper course to pursue.

"Mistah Johnsing," he said at last, "yo' done hyah whut Brothah William Staffo'd an' Sistah Janty Gibbs has said. What yo' got tuh say fo' yo'se'f, Mistah Johnsing; whut yo' got tuh say?"

Mr. Johnson remained silent, smiling inscrutably, while the yellow girl from the Crossroads fidgeted uneasily in her seat. Brother Wiggins made a last pathetic appeal.

"Does you' 'membah whut night it am, Mistah Johnsing?" he inquired. "Don' yo' wan' tuh entah de New Yeah wid clean han's an' feet an' yo' backslidin' confessed an' washed away? 'Membah, po' sinnah, dat even ef yo' sins be scahlet dey kin be made whitah dan snow."

"Whitah dan snow; yes, whitah dan snow,
Wash me, an' I shall be whitah dan snow,"

sang Aunt Martha Young, rocking herself back and forth, while the hymn was taken up by one after another until the roof rang with the refrain,—

"Wash me, an' I shall be whitah dan snow."

As the last notes died away Mr. Samuel Johnson arose.

"Brothah Wiggins," he began, "de sperrit o' de Lawd am wuckin' inside me tuh-night, an' I'd like tuh give in meh 'sperience befo' de New Yeah am 'mongst us."

"Precede, Mistah Johnsing, precede," said the preacher.

"De Ole Yeah done treat me mighty mean in some ways," he continued, "but I'se done de bes' I could, 'co'din' tuh meh lights, an' I'd

like tuh 'splain tuh yo', Brothah Wiggins, dat when I wuh exposed tuh be meanderin' in de valley o' wickedness, ahm-in-ahm wid de devil, de tru'f was dat I was jes' chasin' aftah one po' l'il ewe lamb dat had strayed f'om de fol', an' 'zortin' of huh tuh come back."

An indignant rustle pervaded the congregation, which Brother Wiggins silenced by a wave of his hand.

"'Splain yo'se'f, Mistah Johnsing, 'splain yo'se'f," he said with dignity; "we'se waitin' tuh hyah huccum yo' act like yo' done, an' de time am passin'. 'Splain yo'se'f, Mistah Johnsing."

"Brothah Wiggins," said Mr. Johnson impressively, "yo' done make ref'fence tuh de moon in yo' speechifyin' tuh-night. Whut yo' done say am gospel tru'f. It am de moon, Brothah Wiggins, an' 'specially de harves' moon, dat am 'sponsible fuh many things. Huccum yo' know so much 'bout de moon, Brothah Wiggins? Has yo' felt it wuckin' inside yo' in de silence o' de night?"

"Yo'se strayin' f'om de subjec', Mistah Johnsing, an' yo' time am gittin' sho't," said Brother Wiggins severely.

"De harves' moon," resumed Mr. Johnson, "ez everybody know, am full three nights."

"Reckon 'twa'n't no fullah dan yo' wuh," said a voice from the rear. It was the injured Mrs. Johnson, who occupied a seat near the door, surrounded by her offspring.

"On de firs' o' dese nights las' summah," he continued, without regarding the interruption, "ez I was comin' home f'om huskin' cawn an' walkin' 'long by de canal, I seen somethin' on de tow-path befo' me. It wuh a gal dancin' tuh de music o' de 'cordeen dat somebody in de bushes wuh playin'. 'Who dat?' sez I. 'Come dance,' sez she, holdin' out huh skirt wid one han' an' huh feet twinklin' in de moonlight. 'Come dance,' sez she. Brothah Wiggins, I ain' 'ceivin' of yo'. I ain' tryin' tuh 'scuse meh conduc'; no suh, I'se tellin' yo' de tru'f. De light o' de moon wuh in meh haid; de music o' de 'cordeen got intuh meh feet, an' befo' I knowed it I wuh on de tow-path wid meh ahm roun' de wais' o' dat yallah gal I nevah seen befo'."

"Reckon 'twa'n't so much de light o' de moon in yo' haid ez de feel o' de apple-jack yo' done tuck intuh yo' stummick," proclaimed Mrs. Johnson from the rear.

"Sistah Johnsing, hol' yo' peace," said the pastor; "let him precede."

"De nex' night," resumed Mr. Johnson, "I come home by way o' de tow-path ag'in, an' I tuck meh fiddle wid me, so's I could play fuh huh tuh dance. An' de thu'd night, ez I wuh a-fiddlin' away an' she wuh a-dancin' in de light o' de moon, sho's yo' bawn, Brothah Wiggins, I seen de wo'd SIN in lettahs o' fiah right 'cross meh fiddle."

A sudden thrill ran through the congregation as they bent eagerly

forward, intent on hearing every word. Mr. Johnson, after an impressive pause, continued:

"I done flung de fiddle intuh de canal, an' stahed fuh home, but I wuh dat skeert meh knees trimbled undah me, 'caze I knowed 'twas de han' o' de Lawd done writ dat wo'd on meh fiddle, an' I 'spected it wuh g'wine tuh be laid on me pow'ful heavy in jedgmint."

"Dat am a mighty movin' 'sperience," said Brother Wiggins thoughtfully, "an' yo' mus' be specially favahed tuh have it happen tuh yo'."

"Brothah Wiggins," remarked Uncle William Stafford reflectively, "whut yo' say am true; dat wuh a pow'ful movin' 'sperience, but Mistah Johnsing mus' of fuhgot tuh tell us huccum he tuh leave a lady like Sistah Johnsing hyah, fuh a no' count gal f'om de Crossroads."

"'Splain yo'se'f, Mistah Johnsing, 'splain yo'se'f," said the preacher, "huccum yo' tuh do dat?"

"Dat's whut I'se g'wine tuh do, Brothah Wiggins, when I kin hyah mehse'f speak," replied Mr. Johnson, darting a withering glance in the direction of Uncle William Stafford. "Fuh some time I done keep away f'om de canal an' come home 'cross de ma'sh, but I wa'n't happy 'caze I kep' thinkin' o' de gal I done lef' by huhse'f on de tow-path 'thout no wo'ds tuh tell huh 'bout de sin o' whut she wuh doin'. She done cas' a spell ovah me, Brothah Wiggins, dat's whut she done, an' I couldn't git away f'om it nohow."

"Wotch an' pray, Mistah Johnsing, watch an' pray. Dat's whut yo' mus' do," admonished Brother Wiggins.

"Dat's jes' whut I done," returned Mr. Johnson, "an' den one night ez I wuh walkin' 'long de Dutch Neck road I done hyah a Voice callin' tuh me f'om de empty aiah. 'Sam'l Johnsing,' it say, 'Sam'l Johnsing,' 'Dat's me,' sez I, wid de sweat breakin' out all ovah me. 'Sam'l Johnsing,' it say ag'in, makin' three times, Brothah Wiggins, 'Sam'l Johnsing, huccum yo' leave dat gal on de tow-path 'thout p'intin' out tuh huh whuh she g'wine when she dies ef she don' leave off dancin'? Huccum yo' do dat, Sam'l Johnsing?"

"Lies, all lies," Mrs. Johnson was heard to mutter ominously.

"I done flop down on meh knees," continued the narrator, "an ax de pusson speakin' tuh me whut I mus' do. Sho's yo' bawn, Brothah Wiggins, de Voice done ansuh back. 'Sam'l Johnsing,' it say, 'go back tuh de canal an' walk down de tow-path till yo' fin' dat yallah gal. Take huh by de han' an' 'zort wid huh; labah wid huh, Sam'l Johnsing, labah wid huh ev'ry evenin' till she leave off huh scan'lous conduc'. Dat's whut yo' mus' do, Sam'l Johnsing."

"An' dat's whut I done, Brothah Wiggins. De Voice done say, 'Keep a-walkin' down de tow-path till yo' fin' huh,' I done so. It say, 'Take huh by de han' an' 'zort wid huh,' I done so. It say, 'Go dah

ev'ry evenin'; I done so, Brothah Wiggins, I done so. Did she repent an' tuh'n huh back on de music o' de 'cordeen an' de fiddle? No, suh, dat's whut she didn'. De mo' I 'zorted de mo' she laugh an' dance, till I done feel obligated tuh spen' mo' an' mo' time wid huh."

"De hahts o' some," said Brother Wiggins sympathetically, "am pow'ful hahd tuh move."

"At las'," resumed Mr. Johnson, "jes' ez I wuh makin' up meh min' tuh let huh go huh own way, I done hyah de Voice ag'in. It say, 'De Lawd am angry wid yo', Sam'l Johnsing. Whuh dat stray lamb He done sont yo' out fuh tuh bring intuh de fol'?' I make ansuh dat I couldn't do no mo'. Den de Voice say, pow'ful loud an' strong, 'Yes, yo' kin, Sam'l Johnsing, yes, yo' kin. Leave yo' happy home fuh a while; leave de wife o' yo' buzzom,—de lady o' yo' 'fections,—tuh suppo't de fambly. She kin do it, 'caze she am so pow'ful smaht an' hus'lin'. Yo'se got tuh go live at de Crossroads an' snatch de brand f'om de buhnin'.' Den I axes, kin' o' weak like, whut mo' I got tuh do, an' de Voice done make ansuh, 'Spen' yo' money on huh, Sam'l Johnsing; spen' yo' money on huh. Dat's de way tuh tech huh haht.'"

The yellow girl from the Crossroads simpered consciously and instinctively touched some glittering ornaments pinned to her dress as Mr. Johnson continued:

"De Voice say tuh spen' meh money on huh; I done so. It say, 'Go live at de Crossroads,' I done so. 'Twa'n't easy fuh me, Brothah Wiggins, tuh leave meh wife and chillen. I done hyah whut's been said 'bout me in Poketown, but I fuhgive it all. I wuh wuckin' ovah a strayin' sistah, same ez I wuh tol' tuh do. I labahed early an' late, an' spent meh money lib'ral; she come high, Brothah Wiggins, she come high, but we had tuh have huh, an' dah she am' safe an' soun' at las'. Meh duty am done; I'se g'wine back tuh meh home tuh-night, an' ef anybody hyah have got any mo' tuh say on de mattah, we'll argify outen de back yahd. Is yo' satisfied wid de wuck I'se done fuh yo' chu'ch an' fo' yo', Brothah Wiggins? Does yo' think de New Yeah am g'wine tuh fin' me wid clean han's an' a righteous sperrit?"

"Brothah Johnsing," said the pastor, with much emphasis, "I is. Yo'se done noble; yo'se lived yo' 'ligion in yo' life, not talked it wid yo' mou'f. I'se proud tuh know yo', Brothah Johnsing."

"Dat am meh 'sperience fuh de Ole Yeah, Brothah Wiggins," said Mr. Johnson modestly. "I done fotched de lamb intuh de fol', but it am yo' place tuh look aftah huh an' keep huh feet f'om strayin'. I 'vise yo', Brothah Wiggins, tuh 'zort huh tuh stay in de house on moonlight nights; dat's all."

"It am now twelve o'clock," said Brother Wiggins, as the bells pealed forth their greeting; "de New Yeah am wid us, meh frien's, an' I hopes dat when it am ovah yo'se g'wine tuh have ez much tuh yo'

credit ez Brothah Johnsing have tuh his'n dis las' yeah. Me an' Brothah Johnsing's g'wine tuh stan' side by side befo' de pulpit, an' de congregation am invited tuh shake han's wid us, an' wish us a Happy New Yeah."

"Sam'l Johnsing," said Uncle William Stafford, as he availed himself of the above-mentioned privilege, "yo'se still got somethin' lef' tuh 'splain. Yo' an' me's g'wine tuh argify 'bout dat one-eyed shoat tuh-morrow, Sam'l Johnsing."

"I'll be pleased tuh see yo', Uncl' William," returned Mr. Johnson, smiling somewhat feebly.

"Brothah Johnsing," remarked Aunt Martha Young, "yo'se got de gif' o' gab pow'ful slick, an' when I hyahs yo' talkin' I'se 'bliged tuh b'lieve yo', spite o' mehse'f, but when I tuhns meh back, I ain' so sho', Brothah Johnsing, I ain' so sho'."

Last of all came Mrs. Johnson and family. As she laid her hand on her husband's arm in a proprietary manner a worried expression might have been observed in the eyes of Mr. Johnson.

"Come home wid me," she said in low but distinct accents, "come home wid me, Sam'l Johnsing, an' hyah my 'sperience. I'se g'wine tuh tell it tuh yo' good an' strong. Den yo' kin 'splain yo' conduc' ovah ag'in tuh me. I ain' got it intuh meh haid yit huccum de Lawd tuh give yo' sech pow'ful funny ordahs; maybe meh haid am thick, but I can't see it nohow. Come home an' 'splain."

"Go home wid yo' fambly, Brothah Johnsing," said the pastor, with the air of one who pronounces a benediction; "yo'se airned de right tuh live peaceful an' happy. Go home rejoicin' wid de wife o' yo' buzzom, Brothah Johnsing."

Mrs. Johnson turned suddenly upon her husband as he slowly followed her towards the door.

"Tote de baby," she commanded, thrusting the heavy child into his reluctant arms, "tote de baby. I'se tired, mehse'f; I ain' g'wine tuh do no mo' wuck till yo' 'splains so's I kin onderstan' yo' meanin'. Yo' ain' done dat yit, Sam'l Johnsing,—not yit."



WITHOUT THE TEMPLE

BY ELSA BARKER

NAY, dear, I do not love you any more.
 Put out the altar fire and close the door;
 Love's sacred temple, that we built for him,
 I must profane not—now I love no more.

WAVE-MOTORS

By John E. Bennett

PROBABLY upon no other single subject, save that of navigation of air, have so much thought and energy been expended as upon the conservation and utilization of the power exerted upon our sea-coasts by the force of the waves. And certainly since the days of the alchemists and the astrologers few themes of thought pursued for practical ends have resulted in so little reward to their students. For with all the theories of securing power from wave-action that have been evolved, with all the designs of machines for such purpose that have been drawn, and with all the patents that have been granted upon such drawings, I do not know to-day of a single machine that is an unqualified success, or for which the success stoutly claimed by the inventor is borne out by the actual operations of his working model.

There have been in the United States over one hundred and fifty patents allowed for wave-motors. That each of these was in itself novel, embodying an original idea, was a matter necessarily precedent to the granting of the patent. Of these patents upward of ninety are accredited to the Atlantic seaboard and nearly sixty to the Pacific coast. While a greater number of the inventions have been produced on the Atlantic side,—where, of course, there is the greater population,—yet nearly all of these seem to have proceeded no farther in practical application than the most tentative stages. Those of the Pacific, however, have nearly all been actually and experimentally tried, and in most instances the faith of the inventor has remained unshaken in his novelty until the novelty itself was not only shaken, but utterly deracinated and destroyed by the plunging billows of the surf which rolled and roared against it.

Why this should be is explained by the fact that, owing to the physical character of the respective coasts, experiments are much more difficult to inventors on the Atlantic than on the Pacific. There the cities (where the inventors generally live) are mostly far inland at the end of a long arm or bay. Baltimore, Philadelphia, New York, Boston, all have such situations. Their waters are still waters. For the inventor to get to a place where he can meet wave-action he must travel many miles to the ocean. This is inconvenient, expensive, and the obstacle is such that it generally effects the abandonment of the much-thought-of engine before it ever becomes set into place. On the Pacific

side, however, the case is different. Here the coast is bold and bluff, and the shores are but narrow margins of sand which bevel steeply down to deep water. All the cities are almost on the ocean front. San Diego, Los Angeles, and San Francisco are practically laved by the spume of brine, while Portland, Tacoma, and Seattle, though not upon the ocean, are close to it, and one living in either of these cities has not far to travel to find wave-action adequate to any experiment which he may apply.

Thus it occurs that most of the machines of Pacific-coast invention have actually been set up and tested. This has occurred from Vancouver to San Diego, and at intervals along the whole coast their clanking and thumping have at one time or another been heard, and their bones have strewn the sands,—ratchets and pawls and gearing,—mixed with the débris and the froth, and the seaweed spreading over them like flowers strewn upon a grave.

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From long experience and the observation of many tests with many and varied fashions of machines, expressing multitudinous ideas, it can now be seen what are the real difficulties in the way of the solution of the problem assailed. In the first place, all the inventors have failed to recognize one great fact,—that is, that the power exerted by the waves is a power which resides in area and not in localities. The swell of the ocean is the moving of an immense weight; it would move an inestimable weight were such imposed upon it; but in the heaviest swell the force exerted upon sixteen square feet of surface would be slight; yet sixteen square feet of surface measures the size of the ordinary float attached to a wave-machine. Were it possible to have a float a mile square, souging up and down in the perennially turbulent sea, with rods and ratchets attached to it, which are the tools of the wave-motor man, when such a float arose on the swell it would likely poke up whatever it was designed to raise, or it would break the rods and all else in its effort to do so. An attempt was made by an inventor to attain, on a comparatively small scale, the very end imagined through the use of so large a float. He geared his walking-beam to a schooner lying beside a pier; as the vessel rose and sank with the motion of the waters, he got an action upon his beam. But right at this juncture the eyes of the experimenter were opened to another consideration, and one which would make the mile-wide float, however much power it might exert as a lifting force, totally useless as an attachment to a wave-machine. Our friend with the schooner found, to his dismay, that the riding of the vessel was not sufficient to give the beam a stroke that would produce any effective results. Four inches was about as high as it would at any time ascend. The beam upon its shore end was loose-

riveted to a piston which was arranged to drive in and out a cylinder and raise water out of the bay. Now three and one-half feet is about the ordinary stroke of a piston; but here the stroke was but four inches! And when it was reflected that a rise of the vessel of even two more inches would mean such agitation of the water that it could not abide at the wharf, the project of harnessing a ship and drawing power through it in the manner sought was abandoned.

This perpendicular rise of the waves, or the height of the waves as measured from trough to crest, is an element much overestimated by inventors. Scoresby tells us that the extreme depth of wave-action in the sea is forty-three feet. A vessel will sink in these prodigious abysses almost out of sight to one standing upon the plane of the ocean's surface. But such action, or even very profound action, is possible only in a wide expanse of sea. The water of the waves does not flow. Drop a cork in the sea: it will mount and sink upon wave after wave without travelling an inch, except as it is itself pushed through the water by the wind; the waves simply present the phenomenon of a passing vibrant or energy communicated to the fluid element. In order for this force to gather and present itself, it must have a vast sweep of area unobstructed by shore-lines or shallow water, and it must be impelled, or rather communicated, by great velocity—hence propulsion—of the wind. We can never upon the coast have such wave-action as obtains at sea; and even if we had, it would in no wise avail the wave-motorman, for such action would rip his machine from its anchorage, snap his piles, and sweep the whole apparatus away as though it were a feather balanced on a boy's nose.

So that the wave-motor experimentalist who craves heavy seas would, if he knew what were best for him, be content to abide without them. Indeed, those venturesome persons who have erected their machines upon exposed positions where the storms rage and the billows roll round and heavy have had abundant cause to conclude that high wave-action is not the thing that is wanted; and from the mournful wrecks which have visited not only the motors, but the resources and hopes of the theorists who evolved them, through testing the truth of this very fact, it is not likely that any but the most ignorant of future inventors will ever undertake further demonstration upon this head.

In short, it has come to be seen that a wave-rise of two feet is about as much as it is safe to depend upon. All wave-machine ideas are based upon the notion of a float which rises and falls with the impulses of the water. In order that this float may be able to withstand the rending jostle of the waves, it must be of some weight and stability. Being such, it offers a certain resistance to the lift of the wave, and this the inventor must consider. He will discover that he cannot have a substantial float and get from it more than a foot of rise upon waves of

the maximum force which his machine will endure. Then the question resolves itself down to what he can do with a twelve-inch stroke, whether he wishes to work a pump with it, to turn a wheel, or rock a cradle.

If our inventor could rely upon a twelve-inch stroke there might be something which he could at least calculate upon; but here the wave-motor is deficient in two particulars—viz., uniformity of length of stroke and of interval of stroke. Given a twelve-inch stroke of the piston regularly and rapidly, some sort of result might possibly be attained; but the wave-motor will not allow even this. Twelve inches may be called the maximum; oftener it is but six inches or even four inches. Nothing is more irregular than the drive of the piston which in its action tallies the rise and fall of the float upon the waves. Then the intervals between strokes are not short, but long and of varying periods. There will come two or three rapid movements, then a lapse followed by a single plunge and retraction, then a long spell of silence terminated by a concatenation of sounds and drives, continuing until three or four pulsations of the waves have been spent.

Out of such chaos of movements within the cylinder nothing of value can be evolved. The force presented is simply an insufficient, and hence a waste force. This fact has not been more satisfactorily—or, rather, unsatisfactorily—demonstrated than by a certain inventor who, determining to defy the teredo which had eaten honey-combs in the piling of his previous pier, and to defy also the devastating spirit of the stormiest waves, at the same time availing himself of the utmost of their advantages, built in the most exposed position he could find a strong wall of masonry. In the centre of the face of the wall and below the surface of the water he had a tunnel-like opening which communicated with the bottom of a vertical well or shaft leading to the ground above. In this shaft he had a buoy, and this was connected with a rod which was hinged to an overhead beam, which beam was in turn pivoted upon a pillar, the other end being geared to a piston. When the rollers plunged into the tunnel they tossed up the buoy, which raised the beam and drove the piston into the cylinder, the end sought by the whole performance being to compress air, and with the compressed air to run an engine. Being upon an exposure where the wave-action was great, a stroke of twenty inches was secured on the piston, but even this was found to be utterly insufficient, and the desultory way in which the thing worked was exasperating to the experimenter who had exerted upon the mechanism so much thought and had spent so much money. The big tub of a buoy floated in the shaft in its lubberly way, and when the waters gushed up it would rise a bit, then flop down again and give the beholder the impression that its movement was accomplishing great ends; yet one at the piston could see that these ordinary rises meant a stroke of but six or seven inches. and

generally but four or five. When twenty inches were attained a storm was raging, and the inclination of an observer would be to unship and stow away the whole apparatus in order to preserve it from total annihilation.

And yet one standing upon this esplanade and gazing abroad over the waters and up and down along the frothy lines of curling billows that roll scouring in from the wind-driven plane of the sea—one contemplating such an aspect would impulsively say, What a gigantic force is abroad here, and what a grand thing it would be to convert it to the uses of man; and one would seem to be justified in believing that modern ingenuity, which has attained such marvellous control over the forces of nature, can subdue this element to its ends, and receive from it the energy which it dissipates. It looks so, and this appearance is what has deceived the numerous inventors who have grappled with the subject. The prospect is so enticing: here is a motive power, ceaselessly stirred, which is entirely costless, which needs only to be gathered! The problem abides in the instrument which will absorb and transport this power.

And yet if one would consider, he must notice, as I have remarked, that this force is manifest upon an expanse rather than upon a locality. It is a force similar to that of the wind, and is inherently the same force resident in the wind; it is that force exerting itself upon another fluid than that comprised by the molecules of the air; whether it is in the air or in the water, it is the same energy; and it would seem that one desiring to gather this would be indifferent as to whether he took it from the air or from the water, that considerations of facility, expediency, and cost would be the only ones that would weigh with him in the undertaking. There never was a wave-motor projected but what, had it achieved all the success that its inventor dreamed for it, could have been exceeded in effective results by a wind-mill costing less than the amount necessary to build the motor. Why should he construct a machine to collect from the water energy imparted by the air when he can by a machine of less cost and more certainty in its operation get that energy directly from the air without it first having passed through the intervening and resisting medium of the water? But the air rolls no spectacular billows, nor does it come over the green fringed with a lace of foam and roaring like a lion as it sprawls upon the sands. In other words, though just as potential, the action of the air is not so impressive as that of the sea. And the wave-motorman looks abroad, is thrilled, and straightway resolves to revolutionize the industry of the world by preventing "all this waste of energy." Infinite thought and such experiment as he has means to make, however, convince him finally that this energy cannot be conserved,—at least, not by him,—and, disappointed and disgusted, he retires to repair his fortunes in some enterprise more certain of results.

DECEIVERS EVER

By R. E. Vernède

JUDITH lay in a hammock that swung between two acacias, and the white blossoms fell at intervals into her brown garden-hat and into her browner tresses, which had not yet been put up, I was glad to see. There was a far-away look in her eyes and trouble under them, though I flattered myself the latter disappeared somewhat when she caught sight of me.

"I am so glad to see you again, Mr. Derrick," she said. "It was nice of you to come. You got my letter? [I had got a letter beginning "Dear Uncle Derrick" to announce that Judith would be back from Germany in quite a few days.] It was Fräulein's fault that it was like that. She was very particular about whom we wrote to."

"She doesn't know I'm an old fogey?"

"You're not," said Judith indignantly. "You're nothing of the kind. And it was nice of you to come so soon."

"You don't consider me a boy, I hope," I said.

"Why?" demanded Judith.

"Because I hear you hate boys."

"Oh!"

Judith sank back in the hammock, and the far-away look came back to her eyes again. I began to perceive that there was something in what Mrs. Doyrington had said when she dispatched me into the garden to try and find out what was the matter with Judith.

"I don't know what's wrong with the child," she had said. "She's come back from the school in Germany quite changed."

"Measles?" I suggested.

"It's not physical," said Mrs. Doyrington. "It's mind. She mopes—dismal as a wet cat and won't utter a word."

"Perhaps she's forgotten how to speak English," I said encouragingly. "After a long absence from one's native land, one sometimes forgets the use of it."

But I was on the wrong tack.

"I don't believe she's learnt a word of German," said Mrs. Doyrington with indignation. "I wish to goodness I'd never sent her. I always thought there was a *je ne sais quoi* about those German finishing schools that you can't get even in Paris; but you never can trust these Fräuleins and people. Would you believe it, I invited young Keppel Hathaway here yesterday afternoon on purpose to play badminton with Judith,—such a nice boy, and he'll have twenty thousand a year on

his majority,—and what does Judith do but go out for a walk five minutes before he arrives and stay away till he's gone!"

"Why?" I asked, duly shocked.

"Because she hates boys. That's all I can get out of her, 'I hate boys.'"

"Incredible," I said sympathetically.

"What right has she to hate boys?" continued Mrs. Doyrington. "I never hated boys. None of my family ever did. We always made a point of liking boys."

"It's much pleasanter—for the boys."

"And of marrying early," said Mrs. Doyrington, "and well. It doesn't do to flirt—not with a man who has twenty thousand a year."

"Flirtation should certainly be conducted among the comparatively poor," I agreed, "like slumming."

"Of course," said Mrs. Doyrington.

"And young Hathaway was annoyed?"

"He didn't like it."

"Nobody would."

"Though he does think Judith wonderfully pretty, as, of course, she is. But I've told Judith it won't do. The prettiest girl imaginable couldn't afford to behave like that—and she's sixteen—more——"

"It leaves time enough, doesn't it?" I said.

"You never know," said Mrs. Doyrington. "I was married at seventeen. And Judith'll be out in less than a month. I cannot think where she gets it from. But do go out and see if you can rouse her, Mr. Derrick. She used to tell you everything."

But everything, as I reminded Mrs. Doyrington, concerned dolls in those days. And looking at Judith as she swung in the hammock, bringing down the acacia-blossoms, with the new trouble under her eyes, I wondered how much I was going to learn.

"You are rather like an uncle, Mr. Derrick," she said suddenly.

"Thanky," I said meekly. The position of uncle has its advantages, no doubt. But in any case I have not and am never likely to have twenty thousand a year.

"You see," Judith went on, "you understand things without fussing, and you don't have to consult somebody else about me if I don't happen to want to play croquet or something."

"Badminton, for example," I said.

"Why should one play badminton?" Judith asked with vehemence.

"Or billiards," I said. "One shouldn't, unless one feels inclined. What used you to play with him?"

"With whom?"

"That boy in Germany."

"Lawn-tennis," said Judith. "It's a horrid game, and badminton reminds me of it."

"And Mr. Keppel Hathaway reminds you of—— What was his name?"

Judith looked away into the acacia-trees.

"John Teddington Birt," she murmured.

"Johnnie?" I queried.

"Jack," said Judith instantly. And there was a little pause.

"We all love Jack."

I suppose I must have repeated the refrain aloud, for Judith's eyes came to earth.

"I don't. I hate him. I don't believe I ever did love him either. He was boarding with a tutor there."

"To learn the language—Ich liebe—liebst du——"

"That was all the German he knew," said Judith with scorn. "And he was very conceited about that, as well as about his tennis, though I beat him several times. Fräulein used to take us to the English courts."

"I remember them," I said.

"Were you ever in Rudesheim?" Judith asked, surprised.

"No," I said. "But there always are tennis-courts abroad—English ones—and Fräulein always takes the girls there—to learn German. It's a rule of the establishment."

"We used to go there twice a week," remarked Judith, "with the French governess."

"And she used to knit, didn't she?"

"I wonder how you know that," said Judith.

"The French governess always does," I explained. "It's a kind of instinctive tact—she doesn't have to see all that's going on—and mittens are so useful in the winter. I suppose she didn't see Mr. Birt much."

"I suppose not," said Judith. "There were a lot of trees round the courts,—linden-trees,—and we used to stroll there when we got hot playing to cool—all of us."

"Mixed pairs?"

"Generally," Judith admitted.

"And one fine day——" I prompted.

"It was dreadfully hot," said Judith with a gasp, as if the heat were still obvious, "even under the trees. I don't know how it happened. But he said he'd been thinking over it for a long time. I don't believe he had, because he had been awfully keen on getting up a cricket match against the Germans the week before, and the week before that he was making flies to catch trout in the mountain near Rudesheim,—so that he didn't even come down to the courts for days."

"But he had come to a conclusion, anyhow."

"Yes," said Judith gravely, and a very faint pink grew in her cheeks, so that if John Teddington Birt had been present, I should

certainly have choked him for a blundering, thick-headed boy. "He said that he loved me. He wanted me to leave Fräulein's and run away with him."

"Yes?" I said.

"I didn't know—I wasn't sure what it was like—to love somebody, I mean. It was so—you understand, don't you? And I said I didn't think it would be quite fair to Fräulein to run away like that."

"It wouldn't have been," I said. "Not in the least."

"I'm glad you think so too," said Judith. "Jack—I mean Mr. Birt—didn't. He was rather annoyed, and he said I wasn't game."

The corners of her mouth drooped and shook a little as she repeated this dire verdict.

"I—I wanted to be game," she went on wistfully. "But I suppose girls can't be—very."

"That is the error of the young and very stupid boy," I said, and was glad to see Judith smile, however wanly.

"He didn't seem to think it made all the difference at first," she said. "He told me that, of course, he should always love me, however long I kept him waiting, because men were like that—and he gave me a brooch."

"Coral and gilt, from a German jeweller? I hope you didn't wear it."

"It was a little large," Judith nodded. "I didn't wear it—not outside—because it didn't seem properly to belong to me—until—I thought that later, perhaps. Only, you see, the American girl came later, in the middle of the term. Her name was Damozel P. Giggs—rather a pretty name, wasn't it?" asked Judith.

"P. Giggs?"

"Damozel," Judith said she meant. "Ja—Mr. Birt said he thought it was the prettiest name he'd ever heard, and [Judith pronounced this steadily with a deep breath] that she was the right sort. He didn't play tennis much after that. You see, she said she guessed she didn't hanker on to tennis. And they used to stroll among the trees most of the time we were playing."

Evidently we were approaching a climax. Judith had straightened her slender shoulders.

"I didn't know quite what to do. I had wrapped up the brooch in tissue and brown paper, and I meant to ask him, only I didn't see him alone at all—until one afternoon, when he asked me to go for a stroll. Damozel had been kept in for having her room untidy. So I went, meaning to give him back the brooch, only there wasn't time."

"How was that?" I asked.

"Because," said Judith, "he began talking about it at once. He said it was all very well to pretend to love a man and ruin his whole career by keeping him hanging on."

"The career being?"

"I think he was going into an office," said Judith doubtfully, "if he managed to learn German."

I nodded. Judith was looking away from me.

"It was all very well to ruin that," I reminded her.

"But it wasn't fair to keep a man's presents when I wouldn't do anything for him. He—he wanted to give it to Damozel."

Judith stopped with what was almost a sob, which I respectfully did not observe, and then the sob stopped.

"I threw it down on the ground, and it fell out of the brown paper, and he said I'd broken it, so I gave him five shillings to have it mended. And, oh, Mr. Derrick"—Judith sprang out of the hammock like a young queen of tigers—"oh, I hate boys!"

I suppose the greatest knowledge an uncle can possess is the knowledge of when and how to change a subject of conversation. I changed it then, and we talked of many things gayly, such as the color of hollyhocks. I do not fancy Judith would have been grateful for sympathy, and she was too magnanimous to welcome an opinion as to the merits of John Teddington Birt. Afterwards, when we had forgotten our troubles and it was time for me to be going, Judith accompanied me as far as the house.

"It was so nice of you to come," she repeated. "No, I won't go in. I expect mother'll want to consult you about me. I am rather a trial, you know. But you won't tell?"

"About the hollyhocks?" I asked.

And Judith smiled trustfully. Mrs. Doyrington is not so sure of my discretion.

"Has the child confessed to you?" she asked.

"Judith is the gamest person I know," I answered.

"I dare say," said Mrs. Doyrington, shrugging her shoulders. "But why is she so absurd about boys?"

"She'll get over it," I said. "Perhaps the next one will be nicer."

"The next one? What do you mean, Mr. Derrick?"

I saw that I had nearly betrayed my trust.

"It's a figure of speech," I said vaguely. "I don't think she cares for badminton much. Good-by."



THE PHILOSOPHER

BY CARRIE BLAKE MORGAN

LIKE knight of old is he, armed cap-a-pie,
Fearless and strong in his philosophy.

THE DEMURE WIFE OF NED BARRETT

By Elliott Flower

Author of "Policeman Flynn," etc.



NED BARRETT came to me in great excitement.

"You haven't a minute to lose, old man!" he exclaimed.

"Get over to Jersey City just as quick as you can and meet my wife."

"Your wife!" I cried. "I didn't know you were married."

"Well, I am," he replied, "and my wife is coming on the three-thirty train. For Heaven's sake, don't fail me in this, Joe. You've just time to make it."

"But, Ned!" I expostulated.

"Don't stop to talk!" he broke in impatiently. "I have a carriage for you, and I'll give you the details later."

"Why don't you meet her yourself?" I demanded, as he caught me by the arm and led me out to the carriage.

"I've got to get over to Brooklyn and break the news to the old gentleman," he explained while dragging me along. "Been intending to do it for the last thirty days, but never got my nerve up. Now that she's here, though, it's got to be done in a hurry. Married her secretly, you know, when I was on that Western trip, and she wasn't to join me until I sent for her, but she seems to have got tired waiting. Been watching my chance to tell the old gentleman about it, but he's been grouchy every minute of the time. Got to do it now, though. Hurry, old man!" He pushed me into the carriage and shut the door.

"What shall I say to her?" I asked, sticking my head out of the carriage window.

"Anything! anything!" he replied. "Just keep her entertained until I can join you. Take her to the Waldorf-Astoria for dinner. She'll like that. Unsophisticated, you know. Lived in a small town all her life. Then take her to the theatre, and I'll join you at the Waldorf-Astoria afterwards. Got to allow some time to smooth the old man down, you know."

"But is it quite proper?" I urged. "Young girl, strange man, theatre, gadding about town——"

"Nonsense!" broke in Barrett. "She's a married woman, and you're her husband's friend. Of course it's proper—and necessary."

whether it's proper or not. You needn't worry about that, if I don't."

He spoke to the driver, and the latter started his horses.

"Hold on!" I cried. "How will I know her?"

"Can't miss her," answered Barrett. "Little, demure, shy, dark hair, brown eyes, probably frightened by the noise and all that."

"Answers to the name of Mrs. Barrett?" I suggested, as the horses broke into a trot.

"No! no! no!" he yelled after me. "Travelling under maiden name. Marriage still a secret."

We swung around a corner just as it dawned on me that I did not know her maiden name, but, of course, it wouldn't do to go back.

"Demure and shy little women, travelling alone, are not so numerous that I'll have any difficulty in picking her out," I soliloquized, "but I certainly have an unusual commission to execute."

I could quite understand Barrett's predicament, however. His father was an irascible old fellow, who would be sure to make a fuss over his son's marriage to a girl unknown to the family, and I could hardly blame Ned for his procrastination in making the announcement. I could readily believe that the favorable opportunity for which he had been waiting had failed to materialize. If the business affairs of Barrett senior were not progressing exactly to his liking, he would be irritable and arbitrary for a month or more at a time. In such cases the whole family let him alone, and waited for some sign of returning good-humor. That was what Ned had done, but now he would have to confess and take the consequences. What they would be no one could tell. He might be forgiven or he might be disinherited, and, as he was being trained to succeed his father in business, disinheritance would be a very serious thing.

"Well," I commented, "this job of keeping an apparently neglected young wife in good-humor may not be the best in the world, but I'd a good deal rather have that than Ned's."

I was trying to pick the demure and shy little wife out of the crowd of people passing through the gate in the train-shed when someone touched my arm. I turned and saw a remarkably pretty little woman standing at my elbow.

"I guess you're looking for me," she remarked.

"Yes, yes, of course," I hastened to say. "How blind of me not to see you!"

"Oh, I don't know," she replied carelessly. "How could you expect to know me?"

"I had a good description of you," I explained. "Ned gave it to me. He was awfully sorry he couldn't come himself."

"Quite immaterial," she answered easily. "You'll do just as well."

"I'll do just as well!" I repeated.

"Certainly. Why not?" she asked.

"Pique!" I said to myself. "She's angry because Ned didn't come, and this is her method of revenge. She thinks I'll tell him."

I took the little valise she was carrying and led the way to the carriage.

"He told me to take you to the Waldorf-Astoria," I said.

"Of course," she answered. "I wouldn't go anywhere else."

It was not for me to criticise, but it did occur to me that, for an unsophisticated country girl, she was remarkably self-possessed and decidedly independent.

"Will you please see to my trunks?" she said, handing me four checks.

I looked at her in amazement. Four trunks for this Western prairie belle, this modest little wildflower. Ned might know what he was getting, but I doubted it.

"Don't you think," I suggested, "that we'd better leave these until permanent arrangements are made?"

"No, I don't," she retorted sharply. "I want them sent to the Waldorf-Astoria. That's where I'm going to stay. Why, that's half the satisfaction of coming to New York."

"Poor Ned!" I sighed, as I went to look after the baggage. "He certainly doesn't know what he's got."

Still, she was pretty, and she had a most captivating smile. Nor was she disagreeably aggressive in her independence. She simply took it for granted that what she wanted she would have, and even in her occasional petulance there was something flirtatious and winning. I liked her, and yet I was sorry for Ned. One may admire for the moment what he would not care to have for all time, and to be a good wife a girl must be something more than merely charming.

"She's a spoiled darling," I muttered as we drove along.

"What's that?" she asked.

"Oh, nothing," I replied, "I——" At that moment a ray of sunlight glistened on a lock of yellow hair that straggled out from beneath her hat, and I gave a violent start.

"What's the matter?" she demanded. "Is there anything about me that frightens you?"

And this was the shy little thing from a country town.

"Why—why, the fact is," I blurted out, "I understood that you had dark hair."

"Oh, is that all?" she returned. "It used to be dark, but blondes are the rage now."

A bleached blonde! What a wife for Ned!

"By the way," I remarked, trying not to show my surprise, "you'll pardon me, I know, but I neglected to get your name."

"That's strange," she commented. "I don't see how you could help knowing that."

"Of course, I ought to know it," I admitted, "but I don't."

"It's Beverly,—Miss Annette Beverly," she said.

"Miss?" I interrogated significantly, just to indicate that I was in the secret of her marriage.

"Well, not rightfully 'Miss,' of course," she returned. "You ought to know that."

"I do know it," I said. "Naturally, I know your right name."

"Well, for Heaven's sake, keep it to yourself!" she returned petulantly. "Do you suppose I want to be reminded of it every minute?"

It was evident to me that Ned had some years of trouble ahead of him. A young bride who would let her displeasure with her husband carry her to such extremes as this would be likely to jar him over some rocky places in the matrimonial road. But I could only follow instructions, and leave him to work out his own salvation when he came.

I took the liberty of registering her as "Mrs. Edward Barrett." It seemed to me better that way, in view of all the circumstances, but it made me gasp when she told me she wanted a suite of three rooms.

"One for my maid," she explained. "I engaged one by mail, and she's coming to me to-morrow. The maid I had in the West really wasn't worth bringing to New York."

I made a mental calculation, and decided that this wife of Ned's would burn up his salary for an entire month in just about two days. Then I excused myself to go for a little stroll, promising to return later.

"Yes, do come back," she urged. "I dine at six, and I shall be glad to have you join me. It's so disagreeable to dine alone."

"I—I had intended to ask you to dine with me," I faltered, "and later, when Ned comes——"

"Oh, bother Ned!" she broke in. "I don't want to see him before to-morrow, anyway. I'm going to have a few hours of freedom before settling down to the prosaic affairs of life again."

"But he's coming to-night," I protested.

"I won't see him," she announced with decision. "I'd rather be with you. He'll be sure to worry me with some trouble or other, and you won't. Just forget him until to-morrow, and we'll have a jolly good time, you and I."

"Forget Ned!" I expostulated.

"You're the most loyal man I ever met," she returned, "but you ought to be willing to forget him, if I am. You can arrange for a box

at some good show while I'm ordering dinner. How much fizz are you good for?"

I could only reply, weakly, that I would leave it all to her, and then I went out to collect my thoughts. There was no doubt at all in my mind that nothing that Ned could do would prevent an explosion when his wife and his father met. The kind of a girl who had champagne for dinner and demanded a box at the theatre would not suit him at all. And her references to Ned were simply scandalous, however flattering it might be to me. In truth, I was decidedly worried. How would it all end? She was capricious and wilful, and it was evident that she would have her own way in everything, but where would it land me? Suppose, while I was with her, she should carry out her threat and refuse to see Ned when he came; how could I ever explain it to him? A lifelong friendship would be shattered.

"Lord! what a fool love makes of a man!" I muttered. "How blind it makes him! A shy and demure little woman, and she orders fizz for dinner! An unsophisticated country girl, and she engages a maid the first thing and is satisfied with nothing less than a box at the theatre! Poor Ned! She must have played a part to win him."

But she was pretty and vivacious and entertaining. As an adventure the whole thing was delightful, but—she was Ned's wife, and it doesn't look well for a man to be partaking of tête-à-tête champagne dinners with his friend's wife. I most heartily wished he would come and claim her. I never was so anxious to get rid of a pretty woman before—or since.

"But it's his fault," I argued with myself. "He told me to keep her entertained, and all I can do is to follow instructions and take the chances."

I got the box and returned to the hotel, where I found her reading a trashy novel.

"If you didn't have such a dazed look," she said, as she put the novel aside, "I'd like you ever so much better. What's the matter with you? Didn't you ever meet a lively girl before? You look at me as if I were some strange animal."

"Pardon me," I replied, "but you have given me some—er—surprises."

"Well, I'll give you some more," she returned, "and you'll like this breezy Western way when you get used to it. How would a Manhattan cocktail do for an appetizer? Do you think it would wake you up?"

Unsophisticated! Shy! Demure! What would Ned consider a real lively soubrette?

We had the cocktails, and then we had dinner. It was served in her little parlor, "because," as she explained, "people stare at one so

in the public dining-room." A dinner for two, such as we had, would make people stare, and for Ned's sake, as well as my own, I was rather glad of the seclusion. But it occurred to me during the dinner that she had asked for no explanation of Ned's absence. Apparently, it had been enough for her to know that he was not at the depot to meet her.

"This sprightliness," I commented, "is all put on. She's angry and is determined to make trouble for him, and she can do it too. This kind of a thing would disturb any husband."

We were on the second bottle of champagne. I had deemed it my duty to drink more than my share of the first in order that she might not have more than was good for her, and thereupon she had promptly ordered another.

"I've just learned a new dance," she announced suddenly. "Would you like to see it? It won't be much without music, but push the table back and I'll try it."

A few minutes later, with her skirts pulled above her boot-tops to show the play of her feet, she was giving me an exhibition of some of the wildest and most intricate steps it ever has been my fortune to see. And occasionally one of her little feet strayed more than a few inches from the floor too.

I felt faint. Matters were getting worse and worse. I fidgeted nervously in my chair and glanced anxiously at the door.

"Suppose Ned should come unexpectedly?" I suggested.

"What of it?" she demanded. "Do you suppose I care?"

"He might not like it," I urged.

"Quite immaterial," she returned. "If he thinks he can control my dancing, he's mistaken. I'll do as I please about that."

I deemed it wise to suggest that it was time to start for the theatre.

"It's only a short walk," I remarked.

"We'll ride," she said.

"Poor Ned!" I soliloquized, and, while ordering the carriage, I sent him a telegram. It read, "For Heaven's sake, come at once."

At the theatre she was decorous, but severely critical. The dancing did not please her at all. She said she could do better herself, and I believed her. But I declined to argue the question, being fearful she would endeavor to demonstrate her ability in that direction between the acts. The fact is, Ned's wife had me worried. There was no way of predicting what she would or would not do, and I was glad when she decided to go back to the hotel without waiting for the last act.

"I will wait here," I said, as I left her at the elevator.

"Wait here for what?" she asked.

"For your husband," I replied.

"My husband!" she repeated.

"Yes," I said.

"Which one?" she demanded.

I leaned against the wall for support.

"Surely you haven't more than one," I protested.

"Of course not," she returned, with a laugh. "It was thoughtless of me to speak that way. I've had several, but only one at a time. But why should he come here?"

"I sent for him."

"Oh, you did!" she exclaimed indignantly. "Well, when he comes will you be good enough to tell him from me to go away again? I don't want to see him. He's sure to be in my way."

"I should think likely," I returned sarcastically.

"Husbands," she announced, as she entered the elevator, "are useless encumbrances, anyway. I've had three, and I ought to know."

I settled myself in a big chair, buried my head in my hands, and thought and thought and thought. Country girl! Shy! Demure! Unsophisticated! Champagne! Manhattan cocktails! Fancy dances! Maid! Suite of rooms! Carriages! Three husbands!

"Heaven help Ned!" I muttered with deep emotion.

And then Ned came.

"What do you want of me?" he asked.

"Your wife," I said weakly. "Take her, Ned, take her before she works up a scandal! Take her off my hands quick!"

"I've got her," said Ned.

"Where did you find her?" I asked in astonishment.

"She came to the house," answered Ned.

"Nonsense!" I cried. "She's upstairs."

"I tell you she's at the house!"

"I know better! I just put her on the elevator."

"Don't you suppose I know my own wife?" he demanded.

"If you think she's a shy, demure little thing, I know you don't," I retorted. "You ought to see her drink champagne."

"Are you crazy, Joe?" cried Ned. "When you failed to meet her, she started out by herself and succeeded in finding the house. And the old gentleman is actually delighted with her."

"Then who is the girl upstairs?"

"Give it up," said Ned.

"Come up and we'll see," I urged.

"Not me," said Ned. "This is your affair, and I don't want to get mixed up in it."

"Ned," I said, "you're coming upstairs with me or there's going to be a fight right here. I've had all that I can stand of this."

Ned accompanied me.

"This is Ned," I said abruptly when we reached the room. She looked at him blankly.

"Not Ned Ballard, the vaudeville manager," she returned. I breathed a sigh of relief.

"Then you're a vaudeville performer?" I remarked.

"Star," she corrected. "Vaudeville star. The best in my line. I created a furore in the West, and they offered me big money to come to New York."

When we were alone again I gripped Ned by the hand and congratulated him.

"But," I said, "I wish I'd known she wasn't your wife."

"Why?" he asked.

"Because I do," I said.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

BY MARY LIVINGSTON BURDICK

SAFE in Fame's gallery through all the years,
Our dearest picture hangs, your steadfast face,
Whose eyes hold all the pathos of the race
Redeemed by you from servitude's sad tears.

And how redeemed? With agony of grief;
With ceaseless labor in war's lurid light;
With such deep anguish in each lonely night,
Your soul sweat very blood ere came relief.

What crown have you who bore that cross below?
Oh faithful one, what is your life above?
Is there a higher gift in God's pure love
Than to have lived on earth as Man of Woe?

SORROW

BY IDA WHIPPLE BENHAM

HER heart in breaking spilled a rare perfume,—
Pure chrism of rose-oil, frankincense, and myrrh;
So where she wends or toils, in light or gloom,
All hearts are gratefully aware of her.

CHRONICLING SMALL BEER

By Dr. Charles C. Abbott

Author of "Travels in a Tree-Top," "The Birds About Us," etc.



I HAVE drunk home-brew at a Colonial tavern that Washington did not stop at. Where else is there such a curiosity? Lay down a ruler and trace a straight line. This will best describe the eminent respectability of my native town. In doing so, allow the pen-point to splutter; the scattered blots will indicate my friends.

The fellows who fished all summer and trapped musk-rats in winter were genuine. They had lived too close to nature to be artificial and were as much a product of the soil as any of the oaks on the hill-side or hickories in the meadow. Small beer, if you choose, but how it smacked of the soil?—sassafras, spice-wood, yarrow, and sweet cicely, and to-day I prefer them to any delicate extract from the far-off world.

I have never felt so deeply indebted to anyone for that which has given me most satisfaction in life as to the humblest examples of the neighborhood's small beer, even the rudest home-brew of them all.

"Can you gather figs from thistles?" a village preacher asked reprovingly.

"If the figs are there," I replied.

"But are they?" he asked eagerly, thinking me cornered.

I told him I thought so, and hurried off on an imaginary errand. The truth is, men need proper handling to acquire the desired result. The object of my quest is information, not mere association, and seldom have I failed to obtain it. Many thistles of men carry with them ripe figs of thought. Small beer.

Let me particularize. Here is no imaginary portrait. Such was Nathan Spinyarn, the last of the long list that could boast of Colonial blood and, thank goodness! never did,—a typical ne'er-do-well, snubbed by all and pitied by none. He, in turn, laughed at his toiling neighbors and truly pitied them at times. In this I sympathized, and while I kept in the good graces of the proper folk of the village for policy's sake, my affection went out to the dear, old, unlettered learned who opened up to me the country's real treasure.

Nathan Spinyarn was born, raised, and I would that he still flourished, in this township, wherein I am a resident. For fifty years I can remember him distinctly. He was fifteen years my senior and, so far as I was concerned, as patronizing as ever to the very last. Per-

haps I am foolish in attempting to describe him. He thought so, at any rate, for I read to him much that is here given, and, awaiting his comment, I heard him mutter, "Rot!" Notwithstanding, I believe I am a conscientious biographer.

Nathan Spinyarn as a boy was strikingly ambitious in one direction, that of pleasing himself. This is hearsay, but verified by his own admissions, supplemented by claiming that a love of freedom is a trait of native-born Americans that ought to be cultivated. He had heard so, once, in a speech made at a public meeting. His belief in this direction was confirmed thereby, and from that time to the end he lived on a penny a day, which was never earned if it could be had for the asking, and he lived well, having reduced starvation to a fine art. But I am ahead of my story.

Nathan, when a small boy, once drifted into a Sunday-school, or was dragged there,—accounts differ,—and when asked concerning the chief end of man, merely shook his head. The question was not clear. Trying again, the teacher sought to get from him some idea of moral responsibility. There was no reply. A third effort was made by gradually approaching the subject, the teacher asking him what he best liked to do.

"Shirk work," was the prompt reply.

Herein his success has been phenomenal, so why a fool, as all who knew him declared, is not quite clear.

When Nathan was twenty-one and I was six, he took me a-fishing. This was my first outing under his guidance, and never stood student in the awe-inspiring presence of a professor as I before him. Of course, I caught no fish. The coarse white string and bent pin were not alluring to them. I asked why I had no luck, and was told that it was because I had not spat upon the bait. Soon my mouth was dry from efforts to bring the desired good fortune, but there was no such result, and I again demanded an explanation.

"You've had a boy's luck," he replied, "you've seen *me* catch 'em."

His words roused a vague sense of ownership in the fish he had caught that pleased me, and when we reached home I cried out exultingly, "See what *we* got!"

Years have passed, and as I see it now, his way of putting matters was not that of a fool. I left the creek contented, happy, precisely as he wished me to do, yet people said Nathan Spinyarn was a fool.

•

Four years later I began to study the birds. A nest with eggs accidentally found in the gooseberry hedge brought this phase of life prominent beyond all else, and so Nathan took me a-nesting. It was.

for me, a long walk to a little creek-side woods, but I felt repaid when he pointed to a large nest in a tree. I was eager to climb to it, and Nathan offered no objections. I did climb part way, when oh, such a sickening shower from above! The young herons in that nest resented my intrusion.

I complained bitterly, between my sobs, of his not forewarning me. He only laughed and said: "You young folks will not believe anything but what experience tells you. I've been laughed at by a brat of a boy about your size before now."

It was not at all clear at the time, yet I felt that he was right. A few years later it was very evident that he was right. Yet Nathan was not considered as a man of sense.

At fifteen I felt wiser than my friend, and undoubtedly showed it in more ways than one. I could read; he could not. I was thrown with learned people; he lived alone, seeing few only, even of his own kind. I was quick to ask questions, but not equally ready to accept his replies; he was quick to reach his own conclusions and kept his lips closed. I was far the greater fool of the two, yet did not know it; he did.

There was a glorious flood covering all the meadows, and we were together in a little boat. I aired my knowledge until Nathan was tired. We chanced upon a screech-owl in a hollow tree, and I was bent upon securing it. He demurred on the ground of waste of time. I was persistent. He sculled the boat to the tree. I reached out and was soon among the branches. Then, looking down, I saw Nathan quietly sculling away. I called, but he did not even so much as look up. I called again and again, asking what he expected me to do.

"Tell the owl all you know," he replied, "I'm busy;" and for one long hour I was alone with my thoughts.

Then he returned, and the remainder of the day was delightful, and yet I am called upon to record that Nathan was called a fool.

It was not until I was twenty that this man admitted me to full companionship, and then he loomed up before me as something to study, just as I was then studying the general natural history of my surroundings. Nominally, Nathan was a citizen of Nottingham township, but it is far more true of him that he was a feature of its zoölogy,—one with the raccoon and opossum and the wary otters that still held their own on Crosswicks Creek. There was not a nook or corner in the uncultivated tracts into which he could not enter and fit as snugly as any of its trees or bushes. Everywhere, outside of a town, he was at home. He followed nature's and not man's methods. Time was a matter of day and night; the minor subdivisions were nothing to him. But all this would not have impressed me had he not added to other characteristics perfect satisfaction with his own

conclusions. What others thought he did not care. That he could be wrong did not occur to him.

He was content with whatever weather prevailed, for he had something always on hand that was best accomplished during just such conditions. He was not given to forecasting the weather, yet some "signs" influenced him, as an occasional remark indicated.

I remember his once saying as we were discussing the advisability of postponing a fishing trip, "The moon changes right for a rainy spell."

"There's no truth in that matter," I replied impatiently, referring to the moon's influence as to rain or shine.

"I don't care whether there is any truth in that matter or not, it's so!" he replied, imitating my positive manner very closely.

Of course, the physicist and astronomer could show conclusively that Nathan was an ignoramus, but this would not have shaken my faith in him.

"I suppose you know all about the animals around here," I once said to him very foolishly, meaning all such as he trapped for their skins.

He looked straight out over the meadow and, as if talking to his stick, said: "'Cause you know your own folks, do you know all your neighbors? 'Course not. While I'm a-learnin' the ways o' the critters about here, they get a wrinkle or two about me, and 'fore season's out there's a lot left that can better me every time."

To many people this may seem the climax of absurdity and merely the idle chatter of a fool. In truth, it is philosophy, for he who considers himself solely by virtue of manhood necessarily superior in all things to wild life will find himself beaten in many a test of cunning.

It was not so long ago that I saw Nathan, fully half a mile away. I ran to overtake him. He was not flattered by my eagerness for his company. He gave me a pitying glance and said: "You could 'a' guessed where I was goin' and found me later. Then you'd 'a' been fresh, and now you're fagged and I can't wait till you get rested," and he walked away with long, quick strides, too much for me.

This, of itself, I take it, contradicts the assertion that Nathan was a fool.

I ventured to ask him, when a good opportunity afforded, why he was willing to be a beggar, seeing he was abundantly able to support himself. We were boating, as usual, on Crosswicks Creek, and after a searching glance at me, leaning heavily the while on the oars to stay the boat's course, said he: "The tide flows up and back again and leaves things and brings 'em, goin' and comin', and it's so with the folks up yonder," pointing to the farms stretched along the bluff.

"They come and go and bring or leave more than they've use for, and there's where I come in. Why should I wear myself out workin'?"

Here he paused for my reply, but I had nothing to say.

"Just so," he continued, "when there's a dry spell the trees just wait and wait, and 'fore long the rain comes without their askin' and they get their share, and the leaves are perked up again and all goes on snug as ever. Workin' or worryin' would 'a' done no good."

Again he paused, but I only shook my head negatively.

"Long afore my coat's played out," he went on to say, "someone's sure to offer me a better one that he don't want; so I shed the one and take to the other. What's the good o' workin' for what comes without?"

He did not, this time, pause long enough for my reply, but with increased earnestness said, "Golly! I like to live when there ain't no wood to cut."

I was puzzled all that day to see where his logic was lacking, and the plain truth of the matter is, I am still somewhat in the dark. Perhaps Nathan Spinyarn was an old fool, as they all said, but may it not be a too sweeping assertion? Perhaps it is only "perhaps."

♦

Nathan had no struggle, even with death. While he slept, he died. My many memoranda concerning him have been lying in my desk for some time. Fortunately, by their aid, I can recall with sufficient distinctness one other and almost my last conversation.

I asked him again concerning his views of life. He told me in a rambling way, too prolix and confused to literally reproduce, but I followed him throughout, and made sure of the gist of his argument. It was:

Secure the maximum of results with the minimum of effort, and you are a genius; but the minimum of results from the maximum of effort is sure evidence of kinship with the common herd.

Such was his idea of life, and he held himself to be a genius. My neighbors insist that he was a fool. I am undecided. Let the reader solve the problem for himself.

♦

TASTE

BY RUTH HALL

TASTE is the only test of man:
It holds us here; it draws us far;
It enters into every plan,
For what we like is what we are.

A RACE THROUGH THE NIGHT

By Edgar Jepson



JACK RIVERS let himself into "The Brake," Crayford, feeling very well pleased with himself. After a six months' struggle he had broken the back of the opposition to his great scheme of a Woollen Trust, and at last everything was in train for its formation; his million was a matter of months; he could breathe easily. At the moment, however, he was most pleased that he was going to spend a quiet evening with his wife. It was the first he had enjoyed for six months: all that while, save Sundays, it had been hurry, hurry, and an absent mind battling against the thousand difficulties of his scheme.

"It's been hard on poor Kate," he said to himself with a sigh, as he shut the door gently behind him. "But I can make it up now."

He went quietly through the hall. Kate dined at eight, and it was nearly a quarter past. He wanted to give her a pleasant surprise. He was half way up the stairs on his way to his room to dress when Clarkson, his butler, came hurrying into the hall and cried, "Please, sir!"

"What is it?" said Jack, stopping.

"The mistress told me to give you this note as soon as you came in, sir."

"What! is she out?" said Jack, coming down the stairs.

"The mistress went up to town by the seven-twelve, sir."

Grievously disappointed, Jack took the note and went into the dining-room. It was dark, and its unexpected emptiness chilled him. He had so looked forward to the sight of the graceful figure and the smile and little flush of delighted surprise at his early return. He opened the note slowly, and as he read it his eyes grew staring in a pale face. It ran:

"I have long suspected that you did not care for me any longer. But I tried and tried not to believe it, even when I saw you growing colder and colder, and that even when you were with me your thoughts were far away. I knew all the time you were thinking of someone else, though I tried to persuade myself that you were not. But at last I have learned the truth. I leave you free to go to your actress. At any rate, the man to whom I am trusting my life loves me.

"KATE."

In a dazed, mechanical way Jack folded the letter and put it in his pocket. He stared round the room with dazed eyes, questioning the very walls. What did she mean? What truth had she learned? There was nothing to learn, absolutely nothing. He had never given a thought to anyone else. What did she mean by trusting her life to a man who loved her? Who was the man? Oh, it was a horrible, hideous mistake!

His brain swam. He could not think. He cried aloud querulously: "Oh, I wish my mouth weren't so dry! Why on earth doesn't Clarkson keep the whiskey and soda handy?"

He put his thumb on the button of his electric bell, and kept it there till Clarkson came hurrying in. He watched him mix the whiskey and soda with absorbed interest. The drink braced him. He felt dimly that he must act or go mad. But how act? What could he do?

"Send Célestine to me—at once!" he said sharply. And his tone sent the astonished Clarkson hurrying out of the room.

Jack pulled himself together with that regard for appearances which only the last human stress destroys.

The French maid came in, trim, quiet, and demure, and the moment he saw her sly black eyes, with the intuition born of extreme emotion Jack knew that she knew.

He wasted no time; he pulled out his note-case and took out of it two notes. "Two hundred pounds," he said, holding them out. "Where's my wife?"

The French girl's eyes glistened with excited greed; she held out both hands and said quickly: "She is gone to meet Meestare Steele at ze 'Olborn Hotel. Zey go to Dovare to catch ze night-boat to Calais."

"You're sure?"

"I leestened," said the French girl with convincing frankness.

Jack gave her the notes quietly, and for a full minute stood stock-still. Then he nearly knocked her down in his dash out of the room. He rushed through the house, out of the back-door, and roaring "Potter! Potter!" began fumbling with the lock of the coach-house.

At his imperative call Potter, his motor-car driver, came tumbling down the stairs from his rooms above the coach-house.

"Quick! The Panhard! Is she clean?"

"Yes, sir."

"Out with her! Be smart!"

Potter bustled about, and in five minutes the sixteen-horse-power Panhard moved quietly out of the gates, her Phare Bhériot lamp throwing a great shaft of light before her, Potter steering, his master beside him.

"The Dover Road! As quick as you can!" said Jack.

The cautious Potter sent the car up the hill at about eight miles an

hour, and a clock in Crayford, three miles ahead, chimed the three-quarters as she swung into the main road.

"Two hours and a quarter to get to Dover in. Sixty-two miles. Send her along!" said Jack.

"What!" cried Potter shrilly, "this dark night! I won't try it! It's certain death!" And he brought the car to a dead stand-still. How he was shifted he never knew; but he dropped on his hands and knees in the road. Jack was in his seat, and the car went humming down the road, hooting fiercely as it went.

Jack sent her down to Crayford at fifteen miles an hour, slowed her down to eight for the middle of it, quickened to twelve on the outskirts, and, once past the houses, let her rip. His hand on the steering-wheel, his foot controlling the brake and friction clutch, he leaned forward, his eyes staring into the darkness beyond the blaze of his lamp, every fibre of his being braced to a superhuman intentness.

Carts and carriages seemed to leap into the blaze of his lamps and whiz by him, most of them, warned by his hooter, hugging the side of the road, others he shaved by an inch or two. In the excitement of his nerves he steered as probably no man ever steered before. Every faculty and energy of mind and body were strained to the one effort: he was simply a steering-machine, exact and unerring.

All the while he was conscious that the odds were a hundred to one on his breaking his neck; one tipsy carter was enough. He did not care. It was all one whether he broke his neck or missed the Calais boat. At the time, indeed, he saw very little to choose between them.

Presently, growling savagely under his breath, he slowed down for Dartford, but as soon as the car breasted the steep, winding hill he drove her up it as hard as she would go. Soon he growled again as he slowed down for Gravesend. He did the seven miles from Gravesend to Rochester in seventeen minutes; but the frequent slowing down had wasted time, and he came out of the farther end of the town with an hour and nineteen minutes, and forty-three miles to go.

But it was clearer going now, and he let the Panhard rip till the miles raced under her leaping wheels. Now and again a cluster of lights sprang up to meet him, and he slowed down the barest trifle for each. But for the most part he rushed along through the dark, into which the flare of his lamp drove like a wedge.

Seven or eight miles from Rochester the darkness suddenly oppressed him: now he was dashing against a towering black wall; now he was boring an interminable tunnel.

The passage through Key Street cleared his mind, and turned him to the reason for his straining haste. Presently he was two men, one immersed in steering the car on its furious course, the other pondering and pondering again Kate's letter.

Little by little light stole into his mind: she had mistaken his absorption in his great scheme for coldness to her. Womanlike, she had attributed his absence of mind to dreams of another woman. He had not even noticed her misery. What a fool he'd been! To throw away Kate for a million! He abused the Woollen Trust from the bottom of his heart.

The steering past a great, loaded wagon turned all his thoughts to his race for a while; and then they came back to Kate. What was the world for him without her? Yet how could she have doubted him? Why didn't she speak? Why had she let her pride work this ruin? Suppose he missed the boat? The thought set him shivering with utter terror.

For a while he only steered,—a long while. In his misery he dashed through Faversham and Ospring without slowing down. He did not know what they were, or where he was, or how the time sped. He only looked now and again at the telegraph wires to assure himself that he kept the road.

Then his mind cleared again and the thought of Steele filled him with fury. His familiar friend, of course! The man he had helped times and again. He had been warned often enough that he was a scoundrel. In the bottom of his heart he had known it to be true. Yet in his insensate folly, in his greed to heap up money, he had neglected to guard Kate against him. The scoundrel had poisoned her mind, and clinched her unhappiness with some lie about an actress,—that was the truth she had learned,—and made his profit of her despair.

How long had he been? Surely it was years and years since he left the brake; or had he just started?

Then the darkness began to oppress him again. His strained and burning eyes began to sting. Great glows of crimson light shone across the heavens and faded. Titanic faces, menacing or mocking, flamed out upon him; grisly and disastrous shapes wavered vastly on the black screen. In a new terror he knew that his eyes were going; the optic nerve was giving under the strain. He fought on as long as he could; and then, six miles this side of Canterbury, constraining his feverish desire for haste, he stopped the car and shut his eyes. They throbbed and burned and stung; he would have given a thousand pounds for a basin of cold water. At the end of five minutes they seemed easier, and he opened them. To his joy, the darkness was a mere wall again.

With a gasp of relief he set the car going at full speed, and in a few minutes he slowed down to pass through Canterbury. A lighted church clock gave him the time,—twenty-seven minutes past ten. He had thirty-three minutes and not twenty miles to go. But as he quickened speed a dread of being beaten at the end beset him. Fortune favors the desperate, but beats them on the post. For a while he dared

not send along the car at full speed; then, with the greatest effort of his journey, he did. The miles and the minutes flew; but his dread of being beaten on the post grew heavier and heavier. And sure enough, just beyond Lydden a cart right in the middle of the road sprang into the blaze of his lamp. His heart leaped to his mouth; he steered to the right, the jerking car's right wheels on the grass by the roadside. It leaned over towards the cart; there was a sharp, tearing crack, and he was past it with the loss of a mud-guard. With a groaning gasp he jerked the car back into the road, and as he did it he felt that the tire of the front left wheel had burst. He did not stop; the rim must serve. He did not even slow down. And the car bucketed on.

Suddenly, two miles from Dover, he perceived that it was going slower. His heart sank like a plummet, and the cold sweat burst out on him. Suddenly his ear told him what was wrong; it was the missing tire. He no longer heard the quick, steady, monotonous "Chup! Chup! Chup!" but a jerky "Chup! Chup!—Chup!—Chup! Chup! Chup!—Chup!—Chup!" It might stop at any moment. It ran on and ran on; he expected every turn of the wheels to be the last, and he began to pant heavily. It ran on. The road crawled beneath its wheels; every tree as they drew near it seemed to him to stand suddenly still. It ran on; and the lamps of the town shone out. It seemed to him to crawl towards them: really, it ran still at a fair pace. He was at the edge of the town; and suddenly, away behind him, he heard the scream of the engine of the boat-train. He would do it yet!

He was in the very act of jumping out, when he realized that the car was going faster than he would run. He sat down again in his seat and found himself talking to it, patting it, begging it to make haste, exhorting it, cheering it on. He ran up to the harbor as the boat-train came slowly along to the quay with its brakes squealing.

He stopped the car, jumped down, raced to the gangway of the steamer, and stood by it trembling and panting. He did not know what he was going to do, what he was there for: his mind was a blank. He stared dully at the bright windows of the train as it came to a stand-still.

In a bustle and clatter the passengers came hurrying down to the gangway. He stared at them in a dazed bewilderment: he had business with them; what was it? Suddenly he saw his wife's face, very pale and drawn, and his wits cleared. Steele had his arm through hers and was half dragging her along. She was hanging back, staring round wildly. Jack heard Steele say: "Be brave, darling! Be brave! C'est le premier pas qui coute."

The French phrase struck Jack as something infinitely ridiculous. He laughed a quavering, hysterical laugh, then stepped forward full in front of them.

Steele saw him first and swore savagely.

Jack grasped his wife's arm and tried to speak. His jaws, clinched like a vice for more than two hours, would scarcely move. He could only get out a hoarse murmur of "I shouldn't—I shouldn't—I shouldn't——"

His wife stared at him a moment with wondering, unrecognizing eyes; then she knew him, flung herself on his breast, and, clinging to him, cried wildly: "Jack! Jack! Take me away! Take me away!"

Jack put an arm round her, and, with infinite pain in jaws which seemed to crack, said to the furious Steele, "I—I—can't—punch—your head—I—I—don't—feel—fit."

Without a word, Steele brushed past them and hurried on to the steamer.

Jack stared stupidly after him, passed his hand wearily over his eyes, and, holding Kate very tight, pushed through the curious group which had gathered round them and walked down the quay.

"How did you come? Oh, how did you come, Jack?" said Kate in a voice choked with joy and tears.

He made no answer, but suddenly swerved aside to a great pile of barrels and cases, sat down, and began to cry like a child. Kate put her arms round him and tried to soothe him with kisses and endearments. But for ten minutes he cried and sobbed without restraint in a hopeless helplessness.

At last he pulled himself together and rose. They walked to the Lord Warden, and his legs seemed very stiff and shaky. They came into the glare of the electric light in the hall of the hotel, and Kate cried in a wail: "Your hair! Oh Jack! Poor, poor Jack!"

His hair was white.



ANDANTE

(GRIEG'S 'CELLO SONATA)

BY ROBERT HAVEN SCHAUFFLER

THROUGH the pines the harp-like motion
Of thy music came to me,
Thrilled me, filled me with devotion,
Drew my lesser stream to thee.
Merged now, like a magic potion,
Flow we to the world-sick sea,—
Down to tinge man's bitter ocean
With our mountain purity.

HALCYON WEATHER

BY CLINTON SCOLLARD

HERE'S to the halcyon weather,
And the wild, unfettered will,
The crickets chirring, the west wind stirring
The hemlocks on the hill!
Here's to the faring foot, and here's to the dreaming eye!
And here's to the heart that will not be still
Under the open sky!

Ever the gypsy longing
Comes when the halcyons wing;
Once you own it, once you have known it,
Oh, the thrall of the thing!
A flute-call and a lute-call, quavering loud or low,
It clutches you with its rapturing,
And it will not let you go!

So it's hail to you, my rover,
The god-child of the sun!
In our heir-dom,—freedom from care-dom,—
You and I are one!
One with the many migrants, field-folk feathered or furred,
Ever ready to rally and run
At the sign of the silvery word!

The ways we were wont to follow,
We are fain of them no more;
Rather the braided boughs and the shaded
Paths by the rillet shore!—
The tansy hints and the myrrh of mints, and the balms that the balsams
shed,
The berries, crimson-sweet at the core,
By these are we lured and led.

Then here's to the halcyon weather,
And the old, untrammelled will,—
Cicadas tuning, the west wind crooning
Behind the crest of the hill!
Here's to the truant foot, and here's to the dreaming eye!
And here's to the heart that will not be still
Under the open sky!

TILL A' THE SEAS GANG DRY

(A STORY)

By Mary and Rosalie Dawson



PRYOR.—Suddenly, on the 17th inst., at
his late residence, Madison Avenue,
JAMES S. PRYOR, aged 28 years.

NEW YORK CITY, February 12, 1900.

JIM, DEAR: It's five o'clock, our "comfy hour." I'm writing this from the big leather chair in front of the study fire—the one we always used when you got back from the office about this time in the evening. I'm so glad I thought of this plan of writing letters, Jim. It's almost like talking, and it eases the heart so much more than just letting one's thoughts wander back to the past. "You don't know how lonely I am, dear. What is that quotation about the world being void and empty? That's the way it feels since you left it. And nobody understands! People are always trying to take my mind off things, as they call it. The girls run in to tell me about their balls and dinners and gossip. If they only knew how flat, stale, and unprofitable it all sounded!

Gussie Glazer came in for a moment this morning. I found her bundling away your walking-sticks and golf-clubs into one of the closets. She said it was "ghastly" to have them there in the corner by the door where you left them. Fancy your blessed old sticks being "ghastly," Jimmy, dear!

How odd people are about these things, aren't they? Every one looks so anxious and uneasy if I mention you even, and tries to change the subject.

I'm going to write you a letter every few days or so, dearest, and tell you all the news. It will be a lovely way of spending our hour—the hour from five to six, you know, when we always sat together in the half light and talked. If anything had gone wrong, I always told you about it in the leather chair. My worries always went as soon as I'd told them to you. The little ones you just laughed and smoked away, and the big ones you pricked with a point of philosophy so that they burst like bubbles.

Oh Jim, I must keep looking back, not forward! The years of the future are gray, cold, unreal ghosts arrayed against me. How shall I ever live through them without you?

ETHEL.

Monday.

DEAR JIM: I've just had a terribly close shave, but I pulled out of it all right, and now I've such a nice bit of news for you. Cousin Emily has come to stay with me indefinitely. I know you will be glad to hear that. It was all decided very suddenly. Your mother has been dropping long hints of late about my living here *alone*. But you'll understand, dear, that I couldn't endure *that*. Well, this morning your sister called me up on the phone (your mother has been staying with Anna and Rob). Anna was in despair. She told me that Rob left home this morning declaring that he would never set foot in the house again while his mother-in-law remained in it. Anna wanted to know if I couldn't take your mother for just a week or two until Rob calmed down again a little. But you'll understand, Jim, that I just couldn't do it. You know what it would mean: they never would take her back. So I told Anna that I'd just asked Cousin Emily to live with me. The minute she rang off I flew around to Cousin Emily's. I think she'd grown tired of her boarding-house lately, and she's the dearest old thing in the world anyhow. She agreed to come at once. We packed her trunk on the spot and rushed it right around. We were just unpacking it when your mother walked in with her valise. Of course, under the circumstances, she couldn't stay. (You know how she and Cousin E. love each other!) I think she's gone South to stay with the Allardyces a while.

It's tremendously nice having cousin here. She's so kind and cheerful and homey, and her effect on one is very restful. Of course, there are disadvantages too. Flossie, the poodle, is one of the disadvantages. (How you did detest Flossie, dear!) She has gotten fatter and older than ever now. Age has made her more asthmatic too, and she wheezes all night in cousin's room. Bennett, the butler, has given notice three times already because she sniffs his legs so. He objects very strongly to having to wait on her at table. 'E 'as never been haccustomed to waitin' hon hanimals. Your own devoted

ETHEL.

Thursday.

MY DEAREST BOY: You'll be glad to hear that I've discovered a serious aim for my useless and empty life. Beginning with to-morrow, I am to go in seriously for church work. I never was much of a church-woman, Jim, but now I feel that the rest of my existence should be

devoted to good works. It will be pleasant to feel that I can make the years mean something to others that can never mean anything to me again.

Do you remember Mr. Albright, the new rector? We both disliked him so and thought him such a "molly." We misjudged him, Jim. He is really very earnest and very nice. It was he who suggested that I should take an active part in the work of the church. He called on me this afternoon and stayed almost an hour. He talked so enthusiastically about his parish and his mission and all that sort of thing that I quite liked him. He has organized some sewing-classes among the little Italians, and I agreed to teach one of them. We are to meet for the first time to-morrow. Gussie Glazer and several of the girls I know have taken classes.

Do you remember poor Ted Haily, dear?—the fellow that told Gussie he would have married me if either of us had had a cent? You know he married Elsa Baumheimer, the brewer's daughter (Baumheimer's Best). Gussie has just been telling me about his awful fate. Elsa rules him with a rod of iron. He is hardly allowed to call his life his own. She marched into the library where Ted and a lot of the men were playing poker the other night and ordered the fellows all home. Some of the men who were there when it happened told Gussie, and everybody is laughing about it. Poor Ted! He was always a nice boy!—too good for Baumheimer's Best! Ever your own

ETHEL.

Friday.

DEAREST JIM: My sewing-class didn't turn out to be a howling success. I was introduced to them this morning and gave my first lesson (?). The children, I know, didn't learn anything, but for my part, I learned a lot. Valentina Maria something, who is only ten, showed me how to put on a patch, something I'd never tried before, and a mere infant with the most angelic little face made darts that were works of art. I couldn't begin to do anything like them. On my way home I stopped at Epiphany's and bought two dozen of the dearest little silver thimbles. I'll send them with my resignation in a note to-morrow.

Who do you think I found waiting for me when I got back from the class this morning? Your old chum, Davy Fielding. He is just back from China—tanned the color of copper. He simply couldn't speak at first, Jim. He just stood holding out both hands with his eyes full of tears. He looked so big and strong and handsome that I could almost think it was your blessed self come back to me.

How different Davy is from other people, isn't he? He wanted to hear just how it happened, and everything. We sat down and had the best long talk about you. He told me a lot about your college life

that you never did. How all the fellows adored you, and about all the poor students you helped "on the quiet," as he called it. A lot about your larks too—about the day you put the alarm-clock under the new Prof's desk and the night you dressed the Minerva statue on the campus like a modern girl, and ever so many more.

Cousin Emily and I kept Davy all afternoon and for dinner. It was good to hear a man's boots crunch along the parquet flooring in the hall. I could close my eyes and believe that it was you. Lovingly, your

ETHEL.

Tuesday.

DEAR OLD MAN: You would laugh yourself into a fit almost (as Davy did when I told him half an hour ago) if you were here. But, indeed, it wasn't any joke at the time, and I've only now begun to cool down. You see, Mr. Albright called in the morning to ask if I would make one of a party of the girls who were going down to the colored Mothers' Club which he has organized. The club was to meet in a hall somewhere. He wanted us to talk to the women, show them how to organize, outline their work for them, and help uplift them in other ways. We met in the vestry, about a dozen of us in all, and went together to the colored hall.

Gussie took luncheon with me afterwards. She says that Davy is paying a great deal of attention to Clare Cox and that everybody thinks it will soon mean an engagement. It will be a nice match for him, won't it, dear? Clare is such a good-hearted girl, though she isn't a bit pretty. Your loving

WIFE.

Saturday.

MY DEAR LOVE: There isn't much to write about except that Flossie succumbed to age and asthma a week ago. It was awful! Just like a death in the family. Cousin Emily is only now beginning to be herself again. We buried Flossie in the back yard, and cousin has ordered the dearest little tombstone with Flossie's name and some poetry on it. Bennett officiated as undertaker and grave-digger with undisguised enjoyment. He can hardly conceal his wicked satisfaction over our bereavement. Sometimes at dinner cousin will look at Flossie's high chair in the corner and surreptitiously wipe her eyes. If Bennett catches her in the act he is obliged to retire precipitately into the pantry with his hand over his mouth. Flossie was a great trial to Bennett.

Cousin is calling me to go and inspect the tombstone with her, so no more at present, dear, except that you are dearer and more necessary every day that passes to your own, devoted

ETHEL.

Wednesday.

DEAREST LOVE: Only a short letter to-day, as I have a bad headache, the result of a terrible shock. That disgusting Mr. Albright! You will hardly believe me, dear, when I tell you that he came this morning and asked me to marry him. Of course, it was the money. And to think I believed all that twaddle about his mission and his parish. It was all a bait. The thought of marrying again is so revolting to me that I wasn't even polite. I felt as if he had insulted instead of honoring me. I was so nervous and unstrung that I just sat down in the armchair when he had gone and cried. Davy happened to run in just then for a few minutes, and I had to tell him. He was furious. Wanted to go right out and "punch the parson's head."

No more to-day, darling—my head hurts too much. From your devoted

ETHEL.

Monday.

JIM, DEAREST: I've been so worried and tangled up in business affairs that I haven't felt like writing for ever so long. Those investments of ours have been falling off steadily since old Judge Bronson died, and Cousin Emily is perfectly sure that the younger members of the firm are not dealing fairly with me. If you were only here to look after them! I've been to see young Bronson (the Judge's nephew) half a dozen times at least, but, of course, I get all balled up in his legal phrases and am perfectly helpless in his hands. I know he is cheating. He has those horrid, shifty eyes, and his face is all on one side. They can see at a glimpse that I'm a perfect infant in legal matters. Cousin E. wants me to tell Davy and send him to look after them. I think I will. It seems a lot to ask him, but he's such a generous fellow that he won't mind, and I think he could keep Bronson in order.

I feel that you would want me to call on Davy for help, dear, instead of struggling with these people and being worried. My mind is immensely relieved since Cousin E. suggested asking him. I believe I'll write to him this evening, if he doesn't happen to drop in.

Oh Jim, I never did realize all you were to me until now! I realize it more every day I live. Your ever loving, lonely

ETHEL.

Friday.

MY DEAR LOVE: When I wrote two weeks ago I was in the depths about that investment business, but Davy cleared that all up in a jiffy. He saw Bronson at once, and put him to rights in short order. You know D. has had lots of experience in money-matters, handling his

own income (which is twice as large as ours). I don't know how he handled Bronson. He told me that he had discovered a number of irregularities which looked shady, and put a stop to them and straightened things out generally. The monthly dividend has just come in. It is larger than it has been for months. I am so relieved and so happy. Wasn't it sweet of D. to take so much trouble?

A number of people called to-day, among them Mrs. Morrell, who came to tell me about Marion's wedding. The Morrells have been awfully hard up, people say, and it must have meant a struggle to have everything come off as smartly as it did. They are all terribly distressed about the accounts of the trousseau that got in the papers. Marion had a fawn-colored tailor-gown (Gussie says it was a beautifully cut thing) for her going-away suit. But her father saw the reporters when they called and he described the dress as "mouse-colored," and mouse color is entirely out this season. When they scolded him about it afterwards, he said he "knew it was some kind of animal." Just like a man! They ought to be thankful he didn't think of an elephant or a giraffe.

Mrs. Morrell says that when they cut the cake Clare got the ring, and that everybody is teasing her and Davy about it.

Good-by for to-day, dearest. From your loving

ETHEL.

Sunday.

JIMMY, DEAR: I haven't been a very good correspondent of late. But it wasn't because I think of you less, my darling.

More and more people are coming in now, and I found that I'd have to go around a little in a quiet way. Gussie warned me that people were all saying it was just "pose" that kept me from going anywhere, now that the first year of my mourning is out some time.

Amy Ellis gave a very small dinner yesterday for a Mrs. Agnew from Chicago. She came herself to ask me, and I thought I'd better go. I had Mr. Albright on my right, which was embarrassing. Sometimes I think that refusals ought to be published, like engagements and marriages, so that hostesses could follow them up and things of this sort couldn't happen.

However, I had Davy on my left and devoted myself to him. The Rector was obliged to talk to the oldest Carew girl, who has been after him for months, Gussie says. She looked perfectly ecstatic, but her case is hopeless, poor thing. Fancy that fellow marrying anyone without a good round dot.

I met Pauline Hetherington at the Ellises'. She is to marry again next month. Isn't it horrible! Her poor husband hasn't been in his grave much more than two years. I always knew Pauline had no heart.

Good-by until to-morrow, dearest. I must go and dress for dinner. Davy is coming, and Gussie and two more people—just very intimates. Your loving wife,

ETHEL.

Saturday.

MY DEAREST BOY: I could hardly believe my eyes when I opened this book and found that I hadn't written to you for three whole months.

But you'll understand—you always did understand things, Jim, dear—that it isn't that I think of you less often. It's only because since I came out of deep mourning people make more demands on my time, and I really don't get the opportunity to write.

I think it's wiser for me to go out instead of brooding here alone, and I know you would tell me to do it. But you know where my heart is, love. Something, everywhere I go, speaks of you.

Yesterday Cousin E. took me to one of the symphony concerts with her. They played that part of "Parsifal" that you were so devoted to, and one of your favorite Chopins. I closed my eyes and sat there trying to imagine that you were beside me, as you were the last time I heard the "Parsifal."

There's very little news. I met Rob on the street this morning. He was looking haggard. Your mother, who has been with the Robinsons on Long Island, is back in town. I feel secure, though, with Cousin E. as a bulwark of defence.

Davy hasn't been around in weeks. Gussie tells me that his engagement to Clare is all but announced.

No more just now, dearest, as I am feeling a little tired and out of sorts to-night. Ever your own

ETHEL.

MY OWN DARLING HUSBAND: Don't look at me so reproachfully. Ever since yesterday your portrait over the bookcase seems to follow me round the room with such sad, hurt eyes, dearest! And the funny little shadow of a smile which always flickered around the corners of your mouth is gone.

Jim, I feel that I ought to explain to you about that scene in the study. And yet, how can I explain it, except by saying that it was the greatest surprise and shock to me.

Gussie told me, you know, that his—Davy's—engagement to Clare was as good as announced, so I congratulated him on it as a matter of course. I was just doing it when he—forgot.

If I let him hold me for just a moment it was because he felt so tall and big and strong that it was like having you hold me again.

On a Dying Insect

Then Davy told me that he had been staying away for fear of giving way to this sort of thing. He explained that he didn't want to ask me *so soon*. (He says that there is nothing whatever in that story of Clare. That she is an awfully good sort of girl, but not his style.)

He said that you had always been such an unselfish fellow that he knew you would want me to marry again and have someone to love me and take care of me. But, of course, Jim, with me that was simply out of the question, and I sent him away.

This morning he wrote in the first mail, begging me to see him just once more. He has been so good and done so much for me that I couldn't very well refuse such a little request, so I sent him word to come this afternoon. I am expecting him any minute, now.

Jim, dear, you do forgive me and understand, don't you? You always did underst

FIELDING-PRYOR.—At the residence of the bride, Madison Avenue, New York City, June 14, 1902, by the Rev. Floyd-Johnson, DAVID S. FIELDING to ETHEL MORRIS PRYOR.



ON A DYING INSECT

BY JOHN HALL INGHAM

THOU fluttering mite of gauzy green,
That by untoward flame to-night
Art rudely summoned from a scene
That for some days hath shed delight
On thy small senses,—what has been
Thy profit from this sunny world,
Ere into darkness and oblivion hurled?

A few short flights on shimmering wings,
A few warm ecstasies in air,
A golden glow, a glimpse of things
Not understood, and everywhere
A great, glad life that soars and sings:
Was it not well? Who asketh more
To carry to the all-forgetting shore?

JULIAN MELDOHLA

BY

MARY MOSS

AUTHOR OF "FRUIT OUT OF SEASON"



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